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JUDGMENT AND MERCY
OR WINE AND OIL
FOR WOUNDED &
AFFLICTED
SOULS.



BY FRANCIS QUARLES.





Boanerges and Barnabas;

JUDGMENT AND MERCY

OR

WINE AND OIL

FOR

Wounded & Afflicted Souls.

IN TWO PARTS.



By Francis Quarles.

EDITED BY

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—
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Preface

BY THE EDITOR.

The long established reputation of the writings of Francis Quarles, renders it needless to say much of the excellencies of the work here reprinted. His "Book of Emblems," and his "Hieroglyphics of the Life of Man," with their quaint devices, and solemn appeals addressed to man's better reason, have made his name and his merits familiar to most readers. The present work will not, it is believed, be found inferior to these, in true worth and usefulness. The circumstance of its having been long out of print, has made it less familiar to readers than other of his works, and less known than it deserves to be. In the last edition, too, the work was mutilated and shorn of one of its chief beauties: all those pithy and apt quotations from the writings of holy men of old, which follow after each array of texts from the Word of God, were left out in the last reprint of the work. By this omission, the work was

robbed of many of its most striking and heart-searching thoughts. These passages, moreover, were penned by men who had set to their seal that God is true, and who, in these words, have given to His truth the testimony of their experience. And, therefore, as being a portion of that ever-widening cloud of witnesses, whose light still shines among us, though they themselves have passed away, their testimony, even though it should not be instrumental in awaking the wilful sinner, is especially fitted to strengthen the weak disciple, and encourage the faint-hearted. For they were men of like failings with ourselves, subject to like doubts, and fears, and despondencies; yet they found the grace of God sufficient for them, and by that grace at length obtained the victory. Further, it cannot be doubted but that the author set a great store by these quotations: for they are evidently choice thoughts, culled with much care in the course of laborious and extensive reading. In the present edition, therefore, in justice to the author, as well as for their excellence, they have all been restored, and placed in their proper order.

The author has preserved a strict uniformity in the composition of his work. It addresses itself to every variety of character, from the

lowest in the scale of moral degradation, to the most hopeful in the opposite scale; and each receives a like share of attention.

The abandoned votary of evil pleasures, whatever their nature may be, may here see himself described by a bold unshrinking hand, and all the rude attractions of the course he is following, fairly set down. He is made, as it were, to utter with his own lips, the praises of his cherished and besetting vice, and to defend it by every available argument, with all that specious and cunningly devised reasoning, with which the disciple of sin is wont to defend himself, and to hush the better voice within him. But this description and defence are not given to gratify the sinner, and to confirm him in his evil courses, but to show him the worse than emptiness of all in which he takes delight, when the end thereof is regarded: the burden of each description is, “know thou, that for all these things, God shall bring thee into judgment.” Thus all his reasoning is overthrown, and its falsehood made manifest, by a sentence which is above argument, and before which the wisdom of the worldly-wise must be confounded and come to nought—even the sentence of the Word of God. And this sentence has the testimony of experience given to it, in those words of ancient writers above spoken of.

Checked in his career of folly by this word of truth, and the testimony of holy men, and brought to a sudden halt in his madness, the sinner is not committed to despair, with the threatenings of judgment alone sounding in his ears; in the pauses of the thunders of Sinai the still small voice of mercy is heard, and the entrance upon a better course is pointed out to him. In the "Soliлоquie" which he is supposed to hold with himself, the voice of conscience is made to speak, and to reason with him of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come; and thoughts meet for the beginnings of repentance are suggested to his mind. And the whole concludes with a prayer, in which he is taught, and supposed to make, a contrite confession of his guilt, and to cry unto God for deliverance from its penalties, and for renewal unto holiness.

In the second part, an entirely different class of characters is brought into view: we no longer meet with the sinner boasting of his sins, and defending his course of folly, but with men of a more hopeful caste. The writer's object is no longer to awaken those who are out of the way, but to administer strength and consolation to the feeble and desponding, yet, in the main, sincere child of God. In this portion of the work, the characters are represented as mourn-

ing over failings, and bewailing their weaknesses, deficiencies, and errors, and fainting in spirit, and sick at heart, at their want of progress in the divine life. To these, the Word of God, and the concordant testimony of holy men, are made to speak peace and encouragement, and to point out to them where alone strength and sufficiency may be found. The "Soliloquie" that follows, embraces such thoughts and communings with the heart, as are natural and suitable to those who have received, and accepted as their own, such cheering assurances; and in faith embraced the offered promises. And each character concludes with a prayer of a most suitable nature, in which the mercies of God in Christ Jesus are pleaded as a ground of forgiveness for past failings, and His promises and loving-kindnesses as a ground of claim upon His bounty to bestow upon the suppliant strength for the future, and grace to help in time of need.

Such is the general structure of the work, in dealing with the several characters of which it treats. And by this outline, it is hoped, the end and aim of the author in composing it will be made clear. Should any who are pursuing a course of open and reckless sin, be brought, by what he has written, to stop and consider

seriously with themselves, and to flee from the wrath that awaits them, if they turn not from their iniquities, by taking refuge in the atoning power of the blood of the Cross, and seeking, for the time to come, by the life-giving and renewing grace of the Holy Spirit, to do works meet for repentance ; or, should any who, though they have not wandered from the right way, yet are weary and faint by the way, at the prospect of their own failings and deficiencies, be brought to cast all their burden and care upon God, and to trust Him cheerfully for His promised grace and assistance—should such a result be brought about in any one instance, the object of the author will doubtless be attained, and the sought-for reward of his labours will be reaped by him.

He was, as all his works testify, a man of deep and genuine piety. Early in life he had been brought under the influence of religion : and the troublous times in which he lived, those of the reign of Charles the first, gave him many opportunities of experiencing the support and consolation it can afford under trials and persecution. Hence it was, perhaps, that, although he was brought up to the profession of the law, his studies and writings are rather those of the *divine* : for he was desirous that others also

should be brought under the same influences, and should experience like consolation and comfort with himself: and, therefore, he felt himself constrained to devote the talents which God had entrusted to him, to His service, by promoting the spiritual good of his fellow men.

That the good end which the author aimed at in composing this work may be promoted, and that his reward, and the glory of God may be increased thereby, is the prayer of the editor in putting forth the present edition.

Wirksworth,

September 24th, 1851.



A short Narrative of the
Author's Life,

PREFIXED TO AN EARLY EDITION.

Concerning those we love, we are curious to know all we can. And if the stone be of price, we are not contented the least fragment should perish. Know then that the Author of this Book was a Gentleman of an ancient family. His father was James Quarles of Rumford, Esquire, Clerk of the Green-cloth, and Purveyor of the Navy to Queen Elizabeth, younger brother to Sir Robert Quarles. After his education at School in the Country and at Christ's College in Cambridge, and last at Lincoln's Inn, he was for some time cup-bearer to the Queen of Bohemia, and then Secretary to the Reverend and learned the late Lord Primate of Ireland ; last of all Chronologer to the city of London, in which office he died. And

the world had known that by a more eminent testimony, if death had not kept him from finishing what he had designed and begun. He was the husband of one wife, and by her the father of eighteen children. As in his life he had been most religious, so was he in his death ; in both a great example of devotion. He died September 8th, 1644, being two and fifty years old, and lieth buried in the Parish Church of Saint Foster, London.



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Indument and Merry for Afflicted Souls.

The Sensual Man's Solace.

Come, let us be merry and rejoice our souls in frolic and in fresh delights: let us screw our pampered hearts a pitch beyond the reach of dull-brow'd sorrow: let us pass the slow-paced time in melancholy charming mirth, and take the advantage of our youthful days: let us banish care to the dead sea of phlegmatic old age: let a deep sigh be high treason, and let a solemn look be adjudged a crime too great for pardon. My serious studies shall be to draw mirth into a body, to analyze laughter, and to paraphrase upon the various texts of all delight. My recreations shall be to distil pleasure into a quintessence, to reduce beauty to her first principles, and to extract a perfect innocence from the milk-white doves of Venus. Why should I spend my precious minutes in the sullen and dejected shades of sadness? or ravel out my short-lived days in solemn and heart-breaking care. Hours have eagles wings, and when their hasty flight shall put a period to our numbered days, the world is gone with us, and all our forgotten joys are left to be enjoyed by the succeeding generations, and we are snatched we know not how, we know not

whither, and wrapped in the dark bosom of eternal night. Come then, my soul, be wise, make use of the time present : that which is gone is past recalling, lost, and not to be redeemed. Eat thy bread with a merry heart, and gulp down care in frolic cups of liberal wine. Beguile the tedious nights with dalliance, and steep thy stupid senses in unctions and delightful sports : 'tis all the portion that this transitory world can give thee. Let Music, Voices, Masques, midnight Revels, and all that melancholic wisdom censures vain, be thy delights ; and let thy care-abjuring soul cheer up and sweeten the short days of thy consuming youth. Follow the ways of thy own heart, and take the freedom of thy sweet desires. Leave no delight untried, and spare no cost to heighten up thy lusts. Take pleasure in the choice of pleasures, and please thy curious eyes with all varieties, to satisfy thy soul in all things which thy heart desires.—Aye but, my soul, when those evil days shall come wherein thy wasting pleasures shall present their items to thy bedrid view, when all diseases and the evils of age shall muster up their forces in thy crazy bones, where will be thy comforts then?

His Sentence.

Consider, O my soul, and know that the day will come, and after that another, wherein for all these things

ECCLESIASTES XI. 9.

God will bring thee to judgment.

This Proofs.

PROVERBS XIV. 13.

EVEN in laughter the heart is sorrowful, and the end of that mirth is heaviness.

ECCLESIASTES II. 1. 2.

I said in my heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth, therefore enjoy pleasure: and behold this also is vanity. I said of laughter, It is mad; and of mirth, What doth it?

JAMES V. 5.

Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts as in a day of slaughter.

ECCLESIASTES VII. 4.

The heart of the wise man is in the house of mourning: but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth.

Isid. in Synonymis.

Pleasure is an inclination to the unlawful objects of a corrupted mind, allured with a momentary sweetness.

Hugo.

Sensuality is an immoderate indulgence of the flesh, a sweet poison, a strong plague, a dangerous potion, which effeminate the body, and enervates the soul.

Cass. lib. 4. Ep.

They are most sensible of the burden of affliction that are most taken with the pleasures of the flesh.

This Soliloquie.

WHAT hast thou now to say, O my soul, why this judgment, seconded with divine proofs, back'd with the harmony of holy men, should not proceed against thee? Dally no longer with thy own salvation, nor flatter thy own corruption. Remember, the wages of flesh are sin, and the wages of sin death. God hath threatened it, whose judgments are terrible; God hath witnessed it, whose words are truth. Consider then, my soul, and let not momentary pleasures flatter thee into eternity of torments. How many that have trod thy steps are now roaring in the flames of Hell! and yet thou triflest away the time of thy repentance. O my poor deluded soul, presume no longer; repent to day, lest to-morrow come too late. Or couldst thou travel out thy days beyond Methusalem, tell me, alas! what will Eternity be the shorter for the deduction of a thousand years? be wisely provident, therefore, O my soul, and bid vanity, the common sorceress of the world, farewell. Life and death are yet before thee; choose life, and the God of life will seal thy choice. Prostrate thyself before Him who delights not in the death of a sinner, and present thy petitions to Him who can deny thee nothing in the name of a Saviour.

This Prayer.

O GOD in the beauty of whose holiness is the true joy of those that love thee, the full happiness of those that fear thee, and the only rest of those that prize thee, in respect of which the transitory pleasures of the world are less than nothing, in comparison of which the greatest wisdom of the world is folly, and the glory of the earth but dross and dung ; how dares my boldness thus presume to press into thy glorious presence ? What can my prayers expect but thy just wrath and heavy indignation ? O what return can the tainted breath of my polluted lips deserve, but to be bound hand and foot, and cast into the flames of hell ? But, Lord, the merits of my Saviour are greater than the offences of a sinner, and the sweetness of thy mercy exceeds the sharpness of my misery. The horror of thy judgments hath seized upon me, and I languish through the sense of thy displeasure. I have forsaken thee the rest of my distressed soul, and set my affections upon the vanity of the deceitful world ; I have taken pleasure in my foolishness, and have vaunted myself in mine iniquity ; I have flattered my soul with the honey of delights, whereby I am made sensible of the sting of my affliction : wherefore I loathe and utterly abhor myself, and from the bottom of my heart repent in dust and ashes. Behold, O Lord, I am impure and vile, and have wallowed in the puddle of mine own corruptions. The sword of thy displeasure is drawn out against me ; and what shall I plead,

O thou preserver of mankind ? Make me a new creature, O my God, and destroy the old man within me. Remove my affections from the love of transitory things, that I may run the way of thy Commandments. Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity, and make thy Testimonies my whole delight. Give me strength to discern the emptiness of the creature, and inebriate my heart with the fulness of thy joys. Be thou my portion, O God, at whose right hand stand pleasures for evermore. Be thou my refuge and my shield, and suffer me not to sink under the corruptions of my heart. Let not the house of mirth beguile me, but give me a sense of the evil to come. Accept the free-will offerings of my mouth, and grant my petitions for the honour of thy name. Then will I magnify thy mercies, O God, and praise thy name for ever and ever.

S. Bernard.

Delicate and tender members become not a head stuck with thorns.

Anonym.

The pleasure of sin vanishes, the guilt remains, and the punishment is eternal.



The Vain-glorious Man's Vaunt.

What, tellest thou me of Conscience or a pious life? They are good trades for a leaden spirit, that can stand bent to every frown, and wants the brains to make a higher fortune, or courage to achieve that honour which might glorify their names, and write their memories in the chronicles of fame. 'Tis true Humility is a needful gift in those that have no quality to exercise their pride; and patience is a necessary grace to keep the world in peace, and him that hath it in a whole skin, and often proves a virtue born of a mere necessity. And civil Honesty is a fair pretence for him that hath no wit to act the knave, and makes a man capable of a little higher style than fool. And blushing Modesty is a pretty innocent quality, and serves to vindicate an easy nature from the imputation of all ill-breeding. These are inferior Graces, that have not got a good opinion in the dull wisdom of the world, and appear like water among the Elements, to moderate the body politic, and keep it from combustion; nor do they come into the work of honour. Virtue consists in action, and the reward of action is glory. Glory is the great soul of the little world, and is the crown of all sublime attempts, and the point whereto the crooked ways of policy are all centred. Honour consists not with a

pious life. Let those that are ambitious of a religious reputation abjure all honourable titles, and let their dough-baked spirits take a pride in sufferance (the anvil of all injuries) and be thankfully baffled into a quiet pilgrimage. Rapes, murders, treasons, dispossessions, and riots, are venial things to men of honour, and oft co-incident in high pursuits. Had my dull conscience stood upon such nice points, that little honour I have won had glorified some other arm, and left me begging morsels at his princely gates. Come, come, my soul, *id factum juvat, quod fieri non licet.* Fear not to do, what crowns thee being done. Ride on with thy honour, and create a name to live with fair Eternity. Enjoy thy purchased glory as the merit of thy renowned actions, and let thy memory entail it to succeeding generations. Make thy own game : and if thy conscience check thee, correct thy saucy conscience, till she stand as mute as metamorphosed Niobe. Fear not the frowns of princes, or the imperious hand of various fortune : thou art too bright for the one to obscure, and too great for the other to cry down.

His Verdict.

But hark, my soul, I hear a voice that thunders in mine ear.

HOSEA IV. 7.

I will change their glory into shame.

His Proofs.**PSALM XLIX. 20.**

MAN that is in honour and understandeth not,
is like the beasts that perish.

PROVERBS XXV. 27.

*It is not good to eat much honey: so for men
to search their own glory is not glory.*

JEREMIAH IX. 23. 24.

*Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory
in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory
in his might, let not the rich man glory in his
riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this,
that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I
am the Lord.*

GALATIANS V. 26.

Let us not be desirous of vain glory.

S. August.

*The vain-glory of the world is a deceitful sweetness,
an unfruitful labour, a perpetual fear, a dan-
gerous bravery, begun without providence, and
finished not without repentance.*

Chrysost.

*If thou desirest to be magnified and accounted
honourable, despise honour, so shalt thou be ho-
noured even of all.*

S. Greg.

*He that makes transitory honour the reward of a
good work, sets eternal glory at a low rate.*

This Soliloquie.

VAIN glory is a froth, which blown off discovers a great want of measure. Canst thou, O my soul, be guilty of such an emptiness, and not be challenged ? Canst thou appear in the searching eye of heaven, and not expect to be cast away ? Deceive not thyself, O my soul, nor flatter thyself with thine own greatness. Search thyself to the bottom, and thou shalt find enough to humble thee. Dost thou glory in the favour of a prince ? The frowns of a prince determine it. Dost thou glory in thy strength ? A poor ague betrays it. Dost thou glory in thy wealth ? The hand of a thief extinguishes it. Behold, my soul, how like a bubble thou appearest, and with a sigh break into sorrow. The gate of Heaven is strait ; canst thou hope to enter without breaking ? The bubble that would pass the flood-gates must first dissolve. My soul, melt then in tears, and empty thyself of all thy vanity, and thou shalt find divine repletion ; evaporate in thy devotion, and thou shalt recruit thy greatness to eternal glory.

Anonym.

*Remember, O man, from whence thou wert taken,
and that thou art brother to the dunghill.*

This Prayer.

AND can I choose, O God, but tremble at thy judgments? Or can my stony heart not stand amazed at thy threatenings? It is thy voice, O God, and thou hast spoken it: it is thy voice, O God, and I have heard it. Hadst thou so dealt by me as thou didst by Babel's proud King, and driven me from the sons of men, thou hadst but done according to thy righteousness, and rewarded me according to my deservings. What couldst thou see in me less deserving of thy vengeance, than in him the example of thy justice? or, Lord, wherein am I more incapable of thy indignation? There is nothing in me to move thy mercy but my misery. Thy goodness is thy self, and hath no ground but what proceedeth from itself: yet have I sinned against that goodness, and have thereby heaped up wrath against the day of wrath; insomuch that, had not thy grace abounded with my sin, I had long since been confounded in my sin, and swallowed up in the gulf of thy displeasure. But, Lord, thou takest no delight to punish, and with thee is no respect of persons: thou takest no pleasure in the confusion of thy creature, but rejoicest rather in the conversion of a sinner. Convert me therefore, O God, I shall be then converted: Make me sensible of my own corruptions, that I may see the vileness of my own condition. Pull down the pride of my ambitious heart; humble me, thou O God, and I shall be humbled; wean me from the thirst of transitory honour,

and let my whole delight be to glory in thee. Touch thou my conscience with the fear of thy name, that in all my actions I may fear to offend thee. Endue me, O Lord, with the spirit of meekness, and teach me to overcome evil with a patient heart: moderate and curb the exorbitancies of my passion, and give me a temperate use of all thy creatures. Replenish my heart with the graces of thy Spirit, that in all my ways I may be acceptable in thy sight. In all conditions give me a contented mind, and upon all occasions grant me a grateful heart; that honouring thee here in the Church militant before men, I may be glorified hereafter in the Church triumphant before thee and angels; where, filled with true glory according to the measure of grace thou shalt be pleased to give me here, I may with Angels and Arch-angels praise thy name for ever and ever hereafter.

S. Chrysost.

They who have despised all the temptations of riches, and have defiled themselves with no worldly imagination, and have nobly resisted the strong impulses of concupiscence, oftentimes, being overcome with vain-glory, have lost all.



The Oppressor's Plea.

IMPORTANT but what is my own by law: it was his own free act and deed:—the execution lies for goods or body; and goods or body I will have, or else my money. What if his beggarly children pine, or his proud wife perish?—they perish at their own charge, not mine; and what is that to me?—I must be paid, or he lie by it until I have my utmost farthing, or his bones. The law is just and good: and, being ruled by that, how can my fair proceedings be unjust?—What is thirty in the hundred to a man of trade?—Are we born to thrum caps or pick straws? and sell our livelihood for a few tears, and a whining face?—I thank God they move me not so much as a howling dog at midnight. I'll give no day if heaven itself would be security: I must have present money, or his bones. The commodity was good enough, as wares went then; and had he had but a thriving wit, with the necessary help of a good merchandable conscience, he might have gained perchance as much as now he has lost: but howsoever, gain or not gain, I must have my money. Two tedious terms my dearest gold hath lain in his unprofitable hands. The cost of suits hath made me bleed above a score of royals, besides my interest, travel, half-pints, and bribes; all which does but increase my beggarly defendant's damages,

and sets him deeper on my score : but right is right, and I will have my money or his bones. Fifteen shillings in the pound composition ? I'll hang first. Come, tell not me of a good conscience : a good conscience is no parcel of my trade ; it hath made more bankrupts than all the loose wives in the universal city. My conscience is no fool : it tells me that my own is my own, and that a well crammed bag is no deceitful friend, but will stick close to me when all my friends forsake me. If to gain a good estate out of nothing, and to regain a desperate debt which is as good as nothing, be the fruits and sign of a bad conscience, God help the good. Come, tell me not of griping and oppression. The world is hard, and he that hopes to thrive must gripe as hard. What I give I give, and what I lend I lend. If the way to heaven be to turn beggar upon earth, let them take it that like it. I know not what you call oppression ; the law is my direction : but of the two it is more profitable to oppress than to be oppressed. If debtors would be honest and discharge, our hands were bound ; but when their failing offends my bags, they touch the apple of my eye, and I must right them.

But ha ! what voice is this that whispers in mine ear ?

This Punishment.

PROVERBS XXII. 23.

The Lord will spoil the soul of the Oppressors.

His Proofs.

PROVERBS XXII. 22. 23.

ROB not the poor, because he is poor; neither oppress the afflicted in the gate: For the Lord will plead their cause, and spoil the soul of those that spoiled them.

EZEKIEL XXII. 29. 31.

The people of the land have used oppression, and exercised robbery, and have vexed the poor and needy; yea, they have oppressed the stranger wrongfully: Therefore have I poured out mine indignation upon them; I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath.

ZECHARIAH VII. 9. etc.

Execute true judgment, and shew mercy and compassions every man to his brother: and oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor, and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart. But they refused to hearken:—therefore came a great wrath from the Lord of Hosts.

Bern. p. 1691.

We ought so to care for ourselves, as not to neglect the due regard of our neighbour.

Bern. Ibid.

He that is not merciful to another shall not find mercy from God: but if thou wilt be merciful and compassionate, thou shalt be a benefactor to thy own soul.

Preserve me, O Lord, from the vanity of self-love, and plant in my affections the true love of my neighbours. Endue my heart with the bowels of compassion, and then reward me according to thy righteousness. Direct me, O God, in the ways of my life, and let a good conscience be my continual comfort. Give me a willing heart to make restitution of what I have wrongfully gotten by oppression. Grant me a lawful use of all thy creatures, and a thankful heart for all thy benefits. Be merciful to all those that groan under the burden of their own wants, and give them patience to expect thy deliverance. Give me a heart that may acknowledge thy favours, and fill my tongue with praise and thanksgiving : that living here a new life, I may become a new creature ; and being engrafted in thee by the power of thy grace, I may bring forth fruit to thy honour and glory.

S. Chrysost.

*God is not honoured in the expense of that money,
which is bedewed with the tears of the oppressed.*

PROVERBS XIV. 31.

He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker.



The Drunkard's Jubilee.

What complement will the severer world allow to the vacant hours of frolic-hearted youth ? How shall their free, their jovial spirits entertain their time, their friends ? What oil shall be infused into the lamp of dear society, if they deny the privilege of a civil rejoicing cup ? It is the life, the radical humour of united souls : whose love-digestive heat even ripens and ferments the green materials of a plighted faith ; without the help whereof new married friendship falls into divorce, and joined acquaintance soon resolves into the first elements of strangeness. What mean these strict reformers thus to spend their hour-glasses, and bawl against our harmless cups ? to call our meetings riots, and brand our civil mirth with styles of loose intemperance ? when they can sit at a sisters feast, devour and gormandize beyond excess, and wipe the guilt from off their marrowed mouths, and clothe their surfeits in the long fustian robes of a tedious grace. Is it not much better in a fair friendly round (since youth must have a swing) to steep our soul-afflicting sorrows in a chirping cup, than hazard our estates upon the abuse of Providence in a foolish cast at dice ? or at a cock-pit leave our doubtful fortunes to the mercy of unmerciful contention ? or spend our wanton days in sacrificing costly presents to a fleshy Idol ? Was not Wine given to

exhilarate the drooping hearts and raise the drowsy spirits of dejected souls ? Is not the liberal cup of the sucking-bottle of the sons of Phœbus, to solace and refresh their palates in the nights of sad invention ? Let dry-brained Zealots spend their idle breaths ; my cups shall be my cordials to restore my care-enfeebled heart to the true temper of a well complexioned mirth. My solid brains are potent, and can bear enough, without the least offence to my distempered senses, or interruption of my boon companions. My tongue can, in the very zenith of my cups, deliver the expressions of my composed thoughts with better sense than these my grave reformers can their best advised prayers. My constitution is pot-proof, and strong enough to make a fierce encounter with the most stupendous vessel that ever sailed upon the tides of Bacchus. My reason shrinks not ; my passion burns not.

O but, my soul, I hear a threatening voice that interrupts my language.

ISAIAH V. 22.

Woe be to them that are mighty to drink Wine.

This Proofs.**PROVERBS XX. 1.**

WINE is a mocker; strong drink is raging : and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.

ISAIAH V. 11.

Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflame them.

PROVERBS XXIII. 20.

Be not among wine-bibbers.

1 CORINTHIANS V. 11.

Now I have written unto you, not to keep company, if any that is called a brother be a drunkard, with such an one no not to eat.

Aug. in lib. Pœn.

Whilst the drunkard swallows wine, wine swallows him; God disregards him, Angels despise him; Men deride him, Virtue declines him, the Devil destroys him.

Aug. ad fac. Virg.

Drunkenness is the mother of all evil, the matter of all mischief, the well-spring of all vices, the trouble of the senses, the tempest of the tongue, the shipwreck of chastity, the consumption of time, a voluntary madness, the corruption of manners, the distemper of the body, and the destruction of the soul.

This Soliloquie.

MY soul, it is the voice of God, digested into a judgment. There is no kicking against pricks, or arguing against a divine truth. Pleadest thou custom ? Custom in sin multiplies it. Pleadest thou society ? Society in the offence aggravates the punishment. Pleadest thou help to invention ? Woe be to that barrenness that wants such showers. Pleadest thou strength to bear much Wine ? Woe to those that are mighty to drink strong drink. My soul, thou hast sinned against thy Creator, in abusing that creature He made to serve Thee. Thou hast sinned against the creature, in turning it to the Creator's dishonour ; thou hast sinned against thyself, in making thy comfort thy confusion. How many want that blessing thou hast turned into a curse ? How many thirst whilst thou surfeitest ? What satisfaction wilt thou give to the Creator, to the creature, to thyself, against all whom thou hast transgressed ? To thyself, by a sober life ; to the creature, by a right use ; to thy Creator, by a true repentance. The way to all which is Prayer and Thanksgiving.

His Prayer.

HOW truly then, O God, this heavy woe belongs to this my boasted sin ? How many judgments are comprised and abstracted in this woe : and all for me, even me, O God, the miserable subject of thy eternal wrath : even me, O Lord, the mark whereat the shafts of thy displeasure level ! Lord, I was a sinner in my first conception, and in sin hath my mother brought me forth. I was no sooner born but I was a slave to sin ; and all my life is nothing but the practice and trade of high rebellion. I have turned thy blessings into thy dishonour, and all thy graces into wantonness. Yet hast thou been my God even from the very womb, and didst sustain me when I hung upon my mothers breast. Thou hast washed me, O Lord, from my pollution : but like the swine I have returned to my mire. Thou hast glanced into my breast the blessed motions of thy holy Spirit : but I have quenched them with the spring-tides of my in-born corruption. I have vomited up my filthiness before Thee, and like a dog have I returned to my vomit. Be merciful, O God, unto me. Have mercy on me, O thou Son of David. I cannot, O Lord, expect the children's bread ; yet suffer me to lick the crumbs that fall beneath their table. I that have so often abused the greatest of thy blessings, am not worthy of the meanest of thy favours. Look, look upon me according to the goodness of thy mercy, and not according to the greatness of my offences. Give me, O God, a sober heart, and a law-

ful moderation in the enjoyment of thy creatures. Reclaim my appetite from unseasonable delights, lest I turn thy blessings into a curse. In all my dejection be thou my comfort, and let my rejoicing be only in Thee. Propose to mine eyes the evillness of my days, and make me careful to redeem my time. Wean me from the pleasure of vain society, and let my companions be such as fear thee. Forgive all such as have been partners in my sin, and turn their hearts to the obedience of thy Laws. Open their ears to the reproofs of the wise, and make them powerful in reformation. Allay that lust which my intemperance hath inflamed, and cleanse my affections with the grace of thy good Spirit. Make me thankful for the strength of my body, that I may for the time to come, return it to the advantage of thy glory.

S. August.

It is most shameful, that lust should subdue him whom the strength of man cannot : that he should be overcome with wine, that scorns to stoop to another's sword.

ECCLESIASTICUS XXXI. 25.

Shew not thy valiantness in wine, for wine hath destroyed many.



The Sweater's Apology.

Mill Boanerges never cease? And will these Plague-denouncers never leave to thunder judgments in my trembling ear? Nothing but plagues! nothing but judgments! Nothing but damnation? What have I done to make my case desperate? And what have they not done to make my soul despair? Have I set up false gods like the Egyptians? Or have I bowed before them like the Israelites? Have I violated the Sabbath like the Libertines? Or, like cursed Ham, have I discovered my father's nakedness? Have I embrued my hands in blood like Barabbas? Or like Absalom defiled my father's bed? Have I like Jacob supplanted my elder brother? Or like Ahab intruded into Naboth's vineyard? Have I borne false witness like the wanton Elders? Or, like David, coveted Uriah's wife? Have I not given tithes of all I have? Or, hath my purse been hide-bound to my hungry brother? Hath not my life been blameless before men? and my demeanour unproveable before the world? Have I not hated vice with a perfect hatred? and countenanced virtue with a due respect? What mean these strict observers of my life, to ransack every action, to carp at every word, and with their sharp censorious tongues, to sentence every frailty with damnation; Is there no allowance to humanity? No grains to

flesh and blood ? Are we all Angels ? Has mortality no privilege to supersede it from the utmost punishment of a little necessary frailty ? Come, come, my soul, let not these judgment-thunders fright thee : let not these qualms of their exuberant zeal, disturb thee. Thou hast not cursed like Shimei, nor railed like Rabshakeh, nor lied like Ananias, nor slandered like thy accusers. They that censure thy gnats, swallowed their own camels. What if the luxuriant style of thy discourse, do chance to strike upon an obvious Oath ? art thou straight hurried into the bosom of a Plague ? What if the custom of a harmless Oath should captivate thy heedless tongue, & can nothing under sudden judgment seize upon thee ? What if another's diffidence should force thy earnest lips into a hasty Oath, in confirmation of a suffering truth ? must thou be straight-ways branded with damnation ? Was Joseph marked for everlasting death, for swearing by the life of Egypt's King ? Was Peter, when he so denied his Master, straight damned for swearing, and forswearing ?—O flatter not thyself, my soul, nor turn thou Advocate to so high a sin : Make not the slips of Saints, a precedent for thee to fall.

This Arraignment.

If the rebukes of flesh may not prevail, hear then the threatening of the Spirit, which saith, “The Plague shall not depart from the house of the swearer.”

His Proofs.

EXODUS XX. 7.

THOU shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless, that taketh His name in vain.

ZECHARIAH V. 3.

And every one that sweareth shall be cut off.

MATTHEW V. 34. etc.

Swear not at all: neither by Heaven, for it is God's Throne: nor by the Earth, for it is His footstool: but let your communication be Yea, yea; Nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.

JEREMIAH XXIII. 10.

Because of swearing the land mourneth.

August. in Ser.

The murderer killeth the body of his brother; but the swearer murders his own soul.

August. in Psal. 88.

It is well that God hath forbidden man to swear, lest by custom of swearing (inasmuch as we are apt to mistake) we commit perjury: there is none but God can safely swear, because there is no other but may be deceived.

August. de Mendacio,

I say unto you, swear not all; lest, by swearing, ye come to a facility of swearing; from a facility to a custom; and from a custom ye fall into perjury.

His Soliloquie.

O WHAT a judgment is here ! How terrible ! How full of execution ! The Plague ! The extract of all diseases ! none so mortal, none so comfortless ! it makes our house a prison, our friends, strangers. No comfort but in the expectation of the month's end. Aye, but this judgment excludes that comfort too ; the plague shall never depart from the house of the swearer. What never ? Death will give it a period. No, but it shall be entailed upon his house, his family. O detestable ! O destructive sin ! that leaves a cross upon the doors of generations, and lays whole families upon the dust. A sin whereto neither profit incites, nor pleasure allures, nor necessity compels, nor inclination of nature persuades ; a mere voluntary, begun with a malignant imitation, and continued with an habitual presumption. Consider, O my soul, every oath hath been a nail to wound that Saviour whose blood (O mercy above expression !) must save thee : be sensible of thy actions and His sufferings : abhor thyself in dust and ashes, and magnify his mercy that hath turned this judgment from thee. Go, wash those wounds which thou hast made with tears ; and humble thyself with prayer and true repentance.

This Prayer.

ETERNAL and omnipotent God, before whose glorious Name angels and archangels bow and hide their faces, to which the blessed spirits and saints of thy triumphant church sing forth perpetual hallelujahs; I, a poor sprig of disobedient Adam, do here make bold to take that holy Name into my sin-polluted lips. I have heinously sinned, O God, against Thee, and against It; I have disparaged It in my thoughts, dishonoured It in my words, profaned It in my actions; and I know thou art a jealous God, and a consuming fire, as faithful in thy promises, so fearful in thy judgments. I therefore fly from the dreadful Name of Jehovah, which I have abused, to that gracious Name of Jesus, wherein thou art well pleased: in that most sacred Name, O God, I fall before thee, and for his beloved sake, O Lord, I come unto thee. Cleanse thou my heart, O God, and then my tongue shall praise thee: wash thou my soul, O Lord, and then my lips shall bless thee. Work in my heart a fear of thy displeasure, and give me an awful reverence of thy Name. Set thou a watch before my lips, that I offend not with my tongue. Let no respects entice me to be an instrument of thy dishonour, and let thy attributes be precious in my eyes: teach me the way of thy precepts, O Lord, and make me sensible of all my offences. Let not my

sinful custom in sinning against thy Name, take from my guilty soul the sense of my sin. Give me respect unto all thy commandments; but especially preserve me from the danger of this my bosom sin. Mollify my heart at the rebukes of thy servants, and strike into my inward parts a fear of thy judgments. Let all my communication be ordered as in thy presence, and let the words of my mouth be governed by thy Spirit. Avert those judgments from me which thy word hath threatened, and my sin hath deserved, and strengthen my resolution for the time to come. Work in me a true godly sorrow, that it may bring forth in me a newness of life. Sanctify my thoughts with the continual meditation of thy commandments, and mortify those passions which provoke me to offend thee. Let not the examples of others induce me to this sin, nor let the frailties of my flesh seek fig-leaves to cover it. Seal in my heart the full assurance of thy reconciliation, and look upon me in the bowels of compassion; that crowning my weak desires with thy all-sufficient power, I may escape this judgment which thy justice hath threatened here, and obtain that happiness thy mercy hath promised hereafter.

S. Chrysost.

There is none that useth to swear often, but will sometimes chance to forswear: as he that gives the reins to his tongue too much, often speaks that which he blushes for in silence.

The Procrastinator's Remoras.

Tell me no more of fasting, prayer, and death: they fill my thoughts with dumps of melancholy. These are no subjects for a youthful ear; no contemplations for an active soul. Let them whom sullen age hath weaned from airy pleasures, whom wayward fortune hath condemned to sighs and groans, whom sad diseases have beslaved to drugs and diets; let them consume the remnant of their wretched days in dull devotion: let them afflict their aching souls with the untenable discourses of mortality; let them contemplate on evil days, and read sharp lectures of their experience. For me, my bones are full of unctuous marrow, and my blood of sprightly youth. My fair and free estate secures from the fears of fortune's frown. My strength of constitution hath the power to grapple with sorrow, sickness, nay the very pangs of death, and overcome. 'Tis true, God must be sought: What impious tongue dare be so basely bold to contradict so known a truth?—And by repentance too: what strange impiety dare deny it? Or what presumptuous lips dare disavow it?—But there is a time for all things, yet none prefixed for this, no day designed; but, at what time soever. If my unseasonable heart should seek Him now, the work would be too serious for so green a seeker. My thoughts are yet unsettled, my fancy yet too gamesome, my judg-

ment yet unsound, my will unsanctified. To seek Him with an unprepared heart is the high way not to find Him ; or to find Him with unsettled resolution is the next way to lose Him ; and indeed it wants but little of profaneness, to be unseasonably religious. What is once to be done, is long to be deliberated. Let the boiling pleasures of the rebellious flesh evaporate a little, and let me drain my boggy soul from those corrupted inbred humours of collapsed nature : and when the tender blossom of my youthful vanity shall begin to fade, my settled understanding will begin to knot, solid judgment will begin to ripen, my rightly-guided will will be resolved, both what to seek, and when to find, and how to prize: till then my tender youth, in her pursuit, will be disturbed with every blast of honour, diverted with every flash of pleasure, misled by counsel, turned back with fear, puzzled with doubt, interrupted by passion, withdrawn with prosperity, and discouraged with adversity.

His Rule.

Take heed, my soul : when thou hast lost thy self in thy journey, how wilt thou find thy God at thy journeys end ? Whom thou hast lost by too long delay, thou wilt hardly find with too late a diligence. Take time while time shall serve : that day may come wherein

HOSEA V. 6.

Thou shalt seek the Lord, but shalt not find Him.

His Proofs.**ISAIAH LV. 6.**

SEEK the Lord while he may be found ; call upon him while he is near.

HEBREWS XII. 17.

He found no place for repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.

LUKE XII. 20.

Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee.

REVELATIONS II. 21.

I gave her a space to repent, but she repented not.

Greg. lib. mor.

Seek God whilst thou canst not see Him ; for when thou seest Him thou canst not find Him : seek Him by hope, and thou shalt find Him by faith. In the day of grace He is invisible, but near ; in the day of judgment He is visible, but far off.

Bern. Ser. 24.

If we would not seek God in vain, let us seek Him in truth, often and constantly ; let us not seek another thing instead of Him, nor for any other thing leave Him.

This Soliloquie.

O MY soul, thou hast sought wealth, and hast either not found it, or cares with it: thou hast sought for pleasure, and hast found it, but no comfort in it: thou soughtest honour, and hast found it, and perchance fallen with it: thou soughtest friendship, and hast found it false; society, and hast found it vain. And yet thy God, the fountain of all wealth, pleasure, honour, friendship, and society, thou hast slighted as a toy not worth the finding. Be wise, my soul, and blush at thy own folly. Set thy desires on the right object. Seek wisdom, and thou shalt find knowledge, and wealth, and honour, and length of days. Seek heaven, and earth shall seek thee; and defer not thy inquest, lest thou lose thy opportunity. To day thou mayest find Him whom to-morrow thou mayest seek with tears, and miss. Yesterday is too late, to-morrow is uncertain, to-day is only thine. Aye but, my soul, I fear me too long delay hath made this day too late. Fear not, my soul: He that hath given thee his grace to day will forget thy neglect of yesterday: seek Him therefore by true repentance, and thou shalt find Him in thy prayer.

This Prayer.

O GOD, that like thy precious Word art hid to none but those who are lost, and yet art found by all that seek thee with an upright heart, cast down thy gracious eye upon a lost sheep of Israel, strayed through the vanity of his unbridled youth, and wandered in the wilderness of his own invention. Lord I have too much delighted in my own ways, and have put the evil day too far from me. I have wallowed in the pleasures of this deceitful world, which perish in the using; and have neglected thee my God, at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore. I have drawn on iniquity as with cart ropes, and have committed evil with greediness. I have quenched the motions of thy good Spirit, and have delayed to seek thee by true and unfeigned repentance. Instead of seeking thee whom I have lost, I have withdrawn myself from thy presence when thou hast sought me. It were but justice therefore in thee to stop thine ears at my petitions, or turn my prayers as sin in my bosom. But, Lord, thou art a gracious God, and full of pity and unwearied compassion, and thy loving-kindness is from generation to generation. Lord, in not seeking thee I have utterly lost myself, and if thou find me not, I am lost for ever; and if thou find me, thou canst not but find me in my sins, and then thou findest me to my own destruction. How miserable, O Lord,

is my condition ! how necessary is my confusion that have neglected to seek thee, and therefore am afraid to be found of thee ! but, Lord if thou look upon the all-sufficient merits of thy Son, thy justice will be no loser in showing mercy upon a sinner : in his name therefore I present myself before thee ; in his merits I make my humble approach unto thee : in his name I offer up my feeble prayers ; for his merits grant me my petitions. Call not to mind the rebellions of my flesh, and remember not, O God, the vanities of my youth : inflame my heart with the love of thy presence, and relish my meditations with the pleasure of thy sweetness. Let not the consideration of thy justice overwhelm me in despair, nor the meditation of thy mercy persuade me to presume. Sanctify my will by the wisdom of thy Spirit, that I may desire thee as the chiefest good. Quicken my desires with a fervent zeal, that I may seek my Creator in the days of my youth. Teach me to seek thee according to thy will, and then be found according to thy promise ; that living in me here by thy grace, I may hereafter reign with thee in glory.

Greg.

God that hath promised pardon to the penitent, hath not promised the respite of to-morrow to the impenitent sinner.



The Hypocrite's Prevarication.

Here is no such stuff to make a cloak of as religion; nothing so fashionable, nothing so profitable: it is a livery wherein a wise man may serve two masters, God and the world, and make a gainful service by either. I serve both, and in both myself, by prevaricating with both. Before man none serves his God with more severe devotion: for which, among the best of men, I work my own ends, and serve myself. In private I serve the world; not with so strict devotion, but with more delight: where fulfilling of her servants' lusts, I work my end and serve myself. The house of prayer who more frequents than I? In all Christian duties who more forward than I? I fast with those that fast, that I may eat with those that eat: I mourn with those that mourn. No hand more open to the cause than mine, and in their families none prays longer and with louder zeal. Thus when the opinion of a holy life hath cried the goodness of my conscience up, my trade can lack no custom, my wares can want no price, my words can need no credit, my actions can lack no praise. If I am covetous, it is interpreted providence; if miserable, it is counted temperance; if melancholy, it is construed godly sorrow; if merry, it is voted spiritual joy: if I be rich, it is thought the blessing of a godly life;

if poor, supposed the fruit of conscientiable dealing : if I be well spoken of, it is the merit of holy conversation ; if ill, it is the malice of malignant. Thus I sail with every wind, and have my end in all conditions. This cloak in summer keeps me cool, in winter warm, and hides the nasty bag of all my secret lusts. Under this cloak I walk in public fairly with applause, and in private sin securely without offence, and officiate wisely without discovery. I compass sea and land to make a Proselyte ; and no sooner made, but he makes me. At a fast I cry Geneva, and at a feast I cry Rome. If I be poor, I counterfeit abundance to save my credit ; if rich, I dissemble poverty to save charges. I most frequent schismatical lectures, which I find most profitable, from whence learning to divulge and maintain new doctrines, they maintain me in suppers thrice a week. I use the help of a lie sometimes, as a religious stratagem to uphold the Gospel ; and I colour oppression with God's judgments executed upon the wicked. Charity I hold an extraordinary duty, therefore not ordinarily to be performed. What I openly reprove abroad, for my own profit, that I secretly act at home, for my own pleasure.

His Woe.

But stay, I see a hand-writing in my heart which damps my soul : it is charactered in these sad words.

MATTHEW XXIII. 13.

Woe be to you, Hypocrites.

His Proofs.

JOB XX. 5.

THE triumphing of the wicked is short, the joy of a hypocrite is but for a moment.

JOB XV. 34.

The congregation of hypocrites shall be desolate.

PROVERBS XI. 9.

An hypocrite with his mouth destroyeth his neighbour: but through knowledge shall the just be delivered.

LUKE XII. 1.

Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.

JOB XXXVI. 13. 14.

The hypocrites in heart heap up wrath: they die in youth, and their life is among the unclean.

Salvian. de Gubern. Dei. I. 4.

The hypocrites love not those things they possess, and what they pretend in word, they disclaim in practice: their sin is the more damnable, because ushered in with pretence of piety, having the greater guilt because it obtains a godly reput.

Hieron. Ep.

Endeavour rather to be, than to be thought holy; for what profits it thee to be thought to be what thou art not? And that man doubles his guilt, who is not so holy as the world thinks him, and counterfeits that holiness which he hath not.

His Soliloquie.

HOW like a living sepulchre did I appear; without, beautified with gold and rich invention; within, nothing but a loathed corruption! So long as this fair sepulchre was closed, it passed for a curious monument of the builders art; but being opened by these spiritual keys, it is nothing but a receptacle of offensive putrefaction. In what a nasty dungeon hast thou, my soul, so long remained unstifled! How wert thou wedded to thy own corruptions, that couldst endure thy unsavoury filthiness! The world hated me, because I seemed good; God hated me, because I only seemed good. I had no friend but myself, and this friend was my bosom-enemy. O my soul, is there water enough in Jordan to cleanse thee? Hath Gilead Balm enough to heal thy superannuated sores? I have sinned: I am convinced, I am convicted. God's mercy is above dimensions, when sinners have not sinned beyond repentance. Art thou, my soul, truly penitent for thy sin? Thou hast free interest in His mercy. Fall then, my soul, before His mercy-seat, and He will crown thy penitence with His pardon.

His Prayer.

O GOD, before the brightness of Whose all-discerning eye the secrets of my heart appear ; before Whose clear omniscience the very entrails of my soul lie open ; Who art a God of righteousness and truth, and lovest uprightness in the inward parts ; how can I choose but fear to thrust into thy glorious presence, or move my sinful lips to call upon that Name which I so often have dishonoured, and made a cloak to hide the baseness of my close transgressions ? Lord, when I look into the progress of my filthy life, my guilty conscience calls me to so strict account, and reflects me to so large an inventory of my presumptuous sins, that I commit a greater sin in thinking them more infinite than Thy mercy. But, Lord, Thy mercies have no date, nor is Thy goodness circumscribed. The gates of Thy compassion are always open to a broken heart, and promise entertainment to a contrite spirit. The burthen of my sins is grievous, and the remembrance of my hypocrisy is intolerable. I have sinned against thy Majesty with a high hand, but I repent me from the bottom of an humble heart : as thou hast therefore given me sorrow for my sins, so crown that gift in the freeness of remission. Be fully reconciled to me through the all-sufficient merits of Thy Son my Saviour, and seal in my afflicted heart the full assurance of Thy gracious favour. Be Thou exalted, *O God above the Heavens*, and let me praise

Thee with a single heart. Cleanse Thou my inward parts, O God, and purify the closet of my polluted soul. Fix Thou my heart, O Thou searcher of all secrets, and keep my affections wholly to Thee. Remove from me all bye and base respects, that I may serve Thee with an upright spirit. Take not the word of truth out of my mouth, nor give me over to deceitful lips. Give me an inward reverence of Thy Majesty, that I might openly confess Thee in the truth of my sincerity. Be Thou the only object and end of all my actions, and let Thy honour be my great reward. Let not the hopes of filthy lucre or the praise of men incline me to Thee; neither let the pleasure of the world nor the fears of any loss entice me from Thee. Keep me from those judgments my hypocrisy hath deserved, and strengthen my resolution to abhor my former life. Give me strength, O God, to serve Thee with a perfect heart in the newness of life, that I may be delivered from the Old Man, and the snares of death. Then shall I praise Thee with my entire affections, and glorify Thy Name for ever and ever.

Anonym.

The hypocrite that deceives the eye of man, cannot deceive the eye of God: he fears the eye of them that can only observe, but fears not the eye of God, Who will certainly punish.



The Ignorant Man's Faultering.

All tell me, and you tell me, that I must be a good man, and serve God, and do His will; and so I do, for aught I know. I am sure I am as good as God has made me, and I can make myself no better, so I cannot. And as for serving God, I am sure I go to church as well as the best in the parish, though I be not so fine; and I make no question, if I had better clothes, but I should do God as much credit as another man, though I say it. And as for doing God's will, I beshrew me, I leave that to them that are book-learned, and can do it more wisely. I believe the vicar of our Parish can do it, and has done it too, as well as any within five miles of his head: and what need I trouble myself to do what is so well done already? I hope, he being so good a churchman, and so great a scholar, and can speak latin too, would not leave that to so simple a man as I. It is enough for me to know that God is a good man; and that the ten commandments are the best prayers in all the book, unless it be the creed; and that I must love my neighbour as well as he loves me: and for all other quillcomes, they shall never trouble my brains, 'an grace a God.' Let me go on sundays and serve God, obey the King, (God bless him) do no man no wrong, say the Lord's prayer every morning and evening, follow my work, give a noble to the poor at my death, and then say "Lord have mercy upon me," and go away like a Lamb, I

make no question but I shall deserve heaven as well as he that wears a gayer coat. But yet I am not so ignorant neither, nor have not gone so often to church, but I know Christ died for me too, as well as for any other man; I'd be sorry else; and that next to our vicar, I shall go to heaven when I am dead as soon as another: nay more, I know there be two sacraments, bread and wine, and but two, (though the papists say there be six or seven) and that I verily believe I shall be saved by those sacraments; and that I love God above all, or else it were pity of life; and that when I am dead and rotten (as our vicar told me,) I shall rise again and be the same man as I was. But for that he must excuse me, till I have better satisfaction: for all his learning, he cannot make such a fool, unless he show me a better reason for it than yet he has done.

His Answer.

But one thing he told me, now I think on't, troubles me woundly, namely, God is my Master; all which I confess; and that I must do His will (whether I know how to do it or not) or else it will go ill with me. I will read it (he said) out of God's Bible; and I shall remember the words so long as I have a day to live, which are these,

LUKE XII. 48.

He that knoweth not his masters will, and doth things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes.

His Proofs.

1 CORINTHIANS XIV. 20.

BRETHREN, be not children in understanding : howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men.

1 CORINTHIANS XV. 34.

Awake to righteousness, and sin not ; for some have not the knowledge of God : I speak it to your shame.

EPHESIANS IV. 18.

Walk not in the vanity of your mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance which is in you, because of the blindness of your hearts.

LEVITICUS V. 17.

And if a soul sin, and commit any of these things which are forbidden to be done by the commandments of the Lord, though he wist it not, yet he is guilty, and shall bear his iniquity.

Greg. Mag. Moral.

It is good to know much, and to live well : but if we cannot attain both, it is better to desire piety than wisdom ; for knowledge makes no man happy, nor doth blessedness consist in intellectualls. The only brave thing is a religious life.

Just. Mart. resp. ad orthod.

To sin against knowledge is so much the greater offence than an ignorant trespass, by how much the crime which is capable of no excuse is more heinous than the fault which admits a tolerable plea.

This Soliloquie.

HOW well it had been for thee, O my soul, if I had been book-learned ! Alas ! I cannot read, and what I hear I cannot understand ; I cannot profit as I should, and therefore cannot be as good as I would, for which I am right sorry. That I cannot serve God as well as my betters, hath been often a great grief to me ; and that I have been so ignorant in good things, hath been a great heart-breaking to me. I can say no prayers for want of knowledge to read, but "Our Father" and the Creed : but the comfort is, God knows my heart. But I trust in God that "Our Father," being made by Christ himself, will be enough for me that know not how to make a better. I endeavour to do all our vicar bids me ; and when I receive the communion I truly forgive all the world for a fortnight after or such a matter : but then some old injury makes me forget myself ; but I cannot help it, an my life should lie on it. O my ingrate soul, what shall I do to be saved ? All that I can say is, "Lord have mercy upon me ;" and all that I can do is, but to do my good will : and that I will do with all my heart, and say my prayers too as well as God will give me leave, 'an grace a God.'

This Prayer.

O GOD the Father, of Heaven, have mercy upon me miserable sinner. I am, as I must needs confess, a sinful man, as my forfathers were before me. I have heard many sermons, and have had many good lessons from the mouths of painful ministers ; but through the dulness of my understanding, and for want of learning, I have not profited so much as else I should have done : spare me therefore, O God, spare me whom thou hast redeemed with Thy precious blood, and be not angry for ever. I must confess the painfulness of my calling and the heaviness of my own nature hath taken from me the delight of hearing Thy word ; and the ignorance of learning, which I was never brought up to, hath kept me from reading it ; insomuch that, instead of growing better, I have grown worse and worse, and have been so far from doing Thy will, that I do not understand what Thy will is very well. But Thou, O merciful God, that didst reveal Thyself to poor shepherds and fishermen, that had no more learning than I, have mercy upon me for Jesus Christ's sake. Thou that hast promised to instruct the simple, and to lead the ignorant into Thy way, be good and merciful to me, I beseech Thee. Thou that drawest the needy out of the dust, and the poor out of the dunghill, give me the knowledge of Thy will, and teach me how to serve Thee. Rouse up the

drowsiness of my heart; open my eyes that I may see the truth, and my ears that I may understand Thy Word; and strengthen my memory that I may lay it up in my heart, and shew it in my life and vocation to Thy glory and my comfort, and the comfort of my friends. Lord, write Thy will in my heart, that when I know it, I may do it willingly. O teach me what Thy pleasure is, that I may do my best to perform it. Give me faith to lay hold of Christ Jesus, who died for me, that after I am dead I may rise again and live with Him. Give me a good heart, that I may deal honestly with all men, and do as I would be done to. Bless me in my calling, and prosper the labour of my hands, that I may have enough to feed and clothe me, and to give to the poor. Mend all that is amiss in me, and expect from me according to the measure Thou hast given me. Forgive me all my sins, and make me willing to please Thee; that living a good life, I may make a gracious death, and so at last I may come to Heaven and live for ever, for Jesus Christ, His sake, Amen.

Anonym.

That only is the best knowledge that makes us better.

Anonym.

Ignorance will not excuse sin, when itself is a sin.



The Slothful Man's Slumber.

DWHAT a world of curses the eating of the forbidden fruit hath brought upon mankind, and unavoidably entailed upon the sons of men ! Among all which, no one appears to me more terrible and full of sorrow, and betraying greater wrath, than that insufferable, that horrible punishment of labour, and to purchase bread with so extreme a price as sweat. But, O what happiness have they, whose dying parents have procured a quiet fortune for their unmolested children, and conveyed descended rents to their succeeding heirs, whose easy and contented lives may sit and suck the sweetness of their cumbersome estates, and with their folded hands enjoy the delicacies of this toilsome world ! How blessed, how delicious are those easy morsels, that can find the way to my soft palate, and then attend upon the wanton leisure of my silken slumbers, without the painful practice of my bosom-folded hands, or sad contrivements of my studious and contracted brows ! Why should I tire my tender youth, and torture out my groaning days in toil and travail, and discompose the happy peace of my harmonious thoughts with painful grinding in the common mill of dull mortality ? Why should I rob my craving eyelids of their delightful rest, to cark and care, and purvey for that bread which every work-abhorring vagabond can find of

alms at every good man's door? Why should I leave the warm protection of my care-beguiling down, to play the droyling drudge for daily food, when the young empty ravens (that have no hands to work, nor providence but heaven) can call and be supplied? The pale-faced lily and the blushing rose, neither spin nor sow, yet princely Solomon was never robed with so much glory; and shall I then afflict my body, and beslave my heaven-born soul, to purchase rags to clothe my nakedness? Is my condition worse than sheep ordained for slaughter, that crop the springing grass, clothed warm in soft raiment, purchased without their providence or pains? Or shall the pampered beast, that shines with fatness and grows wanton through his careful groom's indulgence, find better measure at the world's too partial hands than I? Come, come, let those take pains that love to leave their names enrolled in memorable monuments of parchment. The day has grief enough without my help; and let to-morrow's shoulders bear to-morrow's burthens.

His Dilem.

But stay, my soul, O stay thy rash resolves! take heed whilst thou avoidest the punishment of sin, labour, thou meet not the reward of idleness, a judgment..

PROVERBS XIX. 15.

The idle soul shall suffer hunger.

His Proofs.

ECCLESIASTES X. 18.

BY much slothfulness the building decayeth ; and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through.

EZEKIEL XVI. 49.

Behold this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom ; pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her, and in her daughters : neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy.

PROVERBS VI. 6, 7, 8.

Go to the ant, thou sluggard ; consider her ways, and be wise : Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest.

Nilus in Parcenes.

Idleness is the womb or fountain of all wickedness : for it consumes and wastes the riches and virtues which we have already, and disenables us to get those we have not.

Ibid.

Woe be to the idle soul, for he shall hunger after that which his riot consumed.

His Soliloquie.

HOW presumptuously hast thou, my soul, transgressed the express commandment of thy God ! How hast thou dashed thyself against His judgments ! How hath thy undeserving hand usurped the diet, and wearest on thy back the wages of the painful soul ! Art thou not condemned to rags, to famine, by Him, whose law commanded thee to labour ? And yet thou pamperest up thy sides with stolen food, and yet thou deckest thy wanton body with unearned ornaments ; while they that spend their daily strength in their commanded callings (whose labour gives them interest in them) want bread to feed, and rags to clothe them. Thou art no young raven, my soul, no lily. Where ability to labour is, there Providence meets action, and crowns it. He that forbids to care for to-morrow, denies bread to the idleness of to-day. Consider, O my soul, thy own delinquency, and let employment make thee capable of thy God's protection. The bird that sits is a fair mark for the fowler, while they that use the wing escape the danger. Follow thy calling, and heaven will follow thee with His blessing. What thou hast formerly omitted, present repentance may redeem ; and what judgments God hath threatened, early petitions may avert.

His Prayer.

MOST great and most glorious God, Who for the sin of our first parents hast condemned our frail bodies to the punishment of labour, and hast commanded every one a calling and a trade of life, that hatest idleness as the root of evil, and threatenest poverty to the slothful hand; I Thy poor suppliant convicted by Thy judgments, and conscious of my own transgression, fly from Thyself to Thee, and humbly appeal from the high tribunal of Thy justice, and seek for refuge in the sanctuary of Thy mercy. Lord, I have led a life displeasing to Thee, and have been a scandal to my profession; have slighted those blessings which Thy goodness hath promised to a conscientable calling, and have swallowed down the bread of idleness. I have impaired the talent Thou gavest me, and have lost the opportunity of doing much good. I have filled my heart with idle imaginations, and have laid myself open to the lusts of the flesh. I have abused Thy favours in the misexpending of my precious time, and have taken no delight in Thy sabbaths. I have doted too much on the pleasures of this world, and like a drone have fed upon the honey of bees. If Thou, O God, shouldst be extreme to search my ways with too severe an eye, Thou couldst not choose but wet Thy indignation,

and pour the vials of Thy wrath upon me. Look therefore not upon my sins, O Lord ; but through the merits of my Saviour, who hath made a full satisfaction for all my sins. What through my weakness I have failed to do, the fulness of His sufferings hath most exactly done. In Him, O God, in Whom Thou art well pleased, and for His sake, be gracious to my sin. Alter my heart and make it willing to please Thee, that in my life I may adorn my profession. Give me a care and a conscience in my calling, and grant Thy blessing to the lawful labours of my hand. Let the fidelity of my vocation improve my talent, that I may enter into my Master's joy. Rouse up the dulness and deadness of my heart, and quench those flames of lust within me. Assist me, O God, in the redemption of my time, and deliver my soul from the evilness of my days. Let Thy providence accompany my moderate endeavours, and let all my employments depend upon Thy providence ; that when the labours of this sinful world shall cease, I may feel and enjoy the benefit of a good conscience, and obtain the rest of a new Jerusalem in the eternity of glory.

Anonym.

He that is idle, is ready for Satan to set on work.



The Proud Man's Ostentation.

I will make him feel the weight of my displeasure, and teach him to repent his saucy boldness. How dares his baseness once presume to breathe so near my person, much more to take my name into his dunghill mouth? Methinks the lustre of my sparkling-eye might have had the power to astonish him into good manners, and sent him back to cast his mind into a fair petition, humbly presented with his trembling hand. But thus to press into my presence, to press so near my face, and then to speak, and speak to me, as if I were his equal, is more than sufferable. The way to be contemned is to digest contempt; but he that would be honoured by the vulgar sort must wisely keep a distance. A countenance that is reserved breeds fear and observation: but affability and too easy an access makes fools too bold, and reputation cheap. What price I set upon my own deserts, instructs opinion how to prize me. That which base ignorance miscalls thy pride, is but a conscious knowledge of thy merits. Dejected souls, cravened with their own distrusts, are the world's foot-balls to be kicked and spurned: but brave and true heroic spirits, that know the strength of their own worth, shall baffle baseness and presumption into a reverential silence, and spite of envy flourish in an honourable repute. Come then, my soul, advance thy noble, thy sublimer thoughts, and

prize thyself according to those parts, which all may wonder at, few imitate, but none can equal. Let not the insolent affronts of vassals interrupt thy peace, nor seem one scruple less than what thou art. Be thou thyself, respect thyself, receive thou honour from thyself; rejoice thyself in thyself, and prize thyself for thyself. Like Cæsar, admit no equal; and like Pompey, acknowledge no superior. Be covetous of thine own honour, and hold another's glory as thy injury. Renounce humility as an heresy in reputation, and weakness as the worst disease of a true-bred noble spirit. Disparage worth in all but in thyself, and make another's infamy a soil to magnify thy glory. Let such as have no reason to be proud, be humbled of necessity; and let them that have no parts to value, be despondent. But as for thee, thy cards are good; and having skill enough to play thy hopeful game, vie boldly, conquer and triumph.

His Desolation.

But stay, my soul, the trump is yet unturned: beast not too soon, nor call it a fair day till night: the turning of a hand may make such alterations in thy flattering fortunes, that all thy glorious expectations may chance to end in loss and unsuspected ruin. That God Who thrust that Babylonian Prince from his Imperial Throne, to graze with beasts, hath said,

PROVERBS XV. 25.

The Lord will destroy the house of the proud.

This Proofs.

PROVERBS XI. 2.

WHEN pride cometh, then cometh shame: but with the lowly is wisdom.

JEREMIAH XIII. 15.

Hear ye, and give ear; be not proud: for the Lord hath spoken.

ISAIAH II. 12.

The day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low.

PROVERBS XVI. 5.

Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord.

JAMES IV. 6.

God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.

Isidor. Hispal.

Pride made Satan fall from the highest heaven: therefore they that pride themselves in their virtues, imitate the devil; and fall more dangerously, because they aspire and climb to the highest pitch, from whence is the greatest fall.

Greg. Mor.

Pride grows stronger in the riot whilst it braves itself with presumptuous advances, yet the higher it climbs the lower it falls: for he that heightens himself by his own pride is always destroyed by the judgment of God.

Big Salilquie.

HOW wert thou muffled, O my soul ! How were thine eyes blinded with the corruption of thine own heart ! When I beheld myself by my own light, I seemed a glorious thing ; my sun knew no eclipse, and all my imperfections were gilded over with vain-glory : but now the day-spring from above hath shone upon my heart, and the diviner light hath driven away those foggy mists, I find myself another thing : my diamonds are all turned pebbles, and my glory is turned to shame. O my deceived soul, how great a darkness was thy light ! The thing that seemed so glorious and sparkled in the night, by day appears but rotten wood ; and that bright glow-worm, that in darkness outshined the chrysolite, is by this new-found light no better than a crawling worm. How inseparable, O my soul, is pride and folly ! which like Hippocrates' twins still live and die together. It blinds the eye, befools the judgment, knows no superiors, hates equals, despairs inferiors, is the wise mans scorn, and the fools idol. Renounce it, O my soul, lest thy God renounce thee. He that hath threatened to resist the proud, hath promised to give grace to the humble ; and what true repentance speaks, free mercy hears and crowns.

His Prayer.

O GOD the Fountain of all true glory and the Giver of all free grace, Whose Name is only honourable and Whose works are only glorious, that shewest Thy ways to the meek, and takest compassion upon an humble spirit, that hatest the presence of a lofty eye, and destroyest the proud in the imaginations of their hearts ; vouchsafe, O Lord, Thy gracious ear, and hear the sighing of a contrite heart. I know, O God, the quality of my sin can look for nothing but the extremity of Thy wrath ; I know the crookedness of my condition can expect nothing but the furnace of Thy indignation ; I know the insolence of my corrupted nature can hope for nothing but the execution of Thy judgments : yet, Lord, I know withal Thou art a gracious God, of evil repenting Thee, and slow to wrath ; I know Thy nature and property is to shew compassion, apt to conceive, but readier to forgive ; I know Thou takest no pleasure in the destruction of a sinner, but rather that he should repent and live : in confidence and full assurance whereof I am here prostrate on my bended knees, and with an humble heart. Nor do I press into Thy holy presence, trusting in my own merits, lest Thou shouldest deal with me as I have dealt by others ; but being encouraged by Thy gracious invitation, and heavy laden with the burthen of my sins, I come to Thee, O God,

Who art the Refuge of a wounded soul, and the Sanctuary of a broken spirit. Forgive, O God, forgive me what is past recalling, and make me circumspect for the time to come. Open mine eyes that I may see how vain a thing I am, and how polluted from my very birth. Give me an insight of my own corruptions, that I may truly know and loathe myself. Take from me all vain-glory and self-love, and make me careless of the world's applause. Endue me with an humble heart, and take this haughty spirit from me. Give me a true discovery of my own merits, that I may truly fear and tremble at Thy judgments. Let not the world's contempt deject me, nor the disrespects of man dismay me. Take from me, O God, a scornful eye, and curb my tongue that speaks presumptuous things. Plant in my heart a brotherly love, and cherish in me a charitable affection. Possess my soul with patience, O God, and establish my heart in the fear of Thy Name; that being humbled before Thee in the meekness of my spirit, I may be exalted by Thee through the freeness of Thy grace, and crowned with Thee in the kingdom of glory.

Anonym.

Pride is its own punishment, for nothing makes men more contemptible in the eyes of others.



The Covetous Man's Care.

Believe me, the times are hard and dangerous ; charity is grown cold, and friends uncomfortable ; an empty purse is full of sorrow, and hollow bags make a heavy heart. Poverty is a civil pestilence, which frights away both friends and kindred, and leaves us to a "Lord have mercy upon us." It is a sickness very catching and infectious, and more commonly abhorred than cured. The best antidote against it is Angelica and Providence, and the best cordial is *aurum potabile*. Gold-taking fasting is an approved sovereign. Debts are ill humours, and turn at last to dangerous obstructions. Lending is a mere consumption of the radical humour, which if consumed, brings a patient to nothing. Let others trust to courtiers' promises, to friends' performances, to princes' favours ; give me a toy called gold, give me a thing called money. O blessed mammon, how extremely sweet is thy all-commanding presence to my thriving soul ! In banishment thou art my dear companion : in captivity thou art my precious ransom : in trouble and vexation thou art my dainty rest : in sickness thou art my health ; in grief my only joy ; in all extremity my only trust. Virtue must veil to thee ; nay grace itself, not relished with thy sweetness, would even displease the righteous palates of the sons of men.

Come then, my soul, advise, contrive, project ; go, compass sea and land ; leave no exploit untried, no path untrod, no time unspent ; afford thine eyes no sleep, thy head no rest ; neglect thy ravenous belly, unclothe thy back ; deceive, betray, swear, and forswear to compass such a friend. If thou be base in birth, it will make thee honourable ; if weak in power, it will make thee formidable. Are thy friends few ? It will make them numerous. Is thy cause bad ? It will gain thee advocates. True, wisdom is an excellent help, in case it bend this way ; and learning is a genteel ornament, if not too chargeable : yet, by your leave, they are but estates for the term of life : but everlasting gold, if well advantaged, will not only bless thy days, but thy surviving children from generation to generation. Come, come, let others fill their brains with dear-bought wit, turn their pence into expenseful charity, and store their bosoms with unprofitable piety ; let them lose all to save their imaginary consciences, and beggar themselves at home to be thought honest abroad : fill thou thy bags and barns, and lay up for many years, and take thy rest.

This Curse,

But, O my soul, what follows wounds my heart and strikes me on my knees.

LUKE XII. 20.

Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee.

This Proofs.

MATTHEW VI. 24.

YE cannot serve God and mammon.

JOB XX. 15.

He hath swallowed down riches, and he shall vomit them up again: God shall cast them out of his belly.

PROVERBS XV. 27.

He that is greedy of gain, troubleth his own house; but he that hateth gifts, shall live.

2 PETER II. 3.

Through covetousness, shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you; whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.

Nilus in Parænes.*Woe to the covetous, for his riches forsake him, and hell fire takes him.*

S. August.

O thou covetous man, why dost thou treasure up such hidden mischief? Why dost thou dote on the image of the king stamped on coin, and hatest the image of God that shines in men?

Idem.

The riches which thou treasurest up, are lost; those thou charitably bestowest are truly thine.

This Soliloquy.

WHAT thinkest thou now, my soul ? If the judgment of holy men may not inform thee, let the judgments of thy angry God enforce thee. Weigh thy own carnal affections with the sacred oracles of Heaven, and light and darkness are not more contrary. What thou approvest, thy God condemns ; what thou desirest, thy God forbids. Now, my soul, if mammon be God, follow him ; if God be God, adhere to him : thou canst not serve God and mammon. If thy conscience feel the hook, nibble no longer. Many sins leave thee in the way, this follows thee to thy life's end ; the root of evil, the canker of all goodness ; it blinds justice, poisons charity, strangles conscience, beslaves the affections, betrays friendship, breaks all relations. It is a root of the Devil's own planting ; pluck it up. Think not that a pleasure which God hath threatened ; nor that a blessing which Heaven hath cursed. Devour not that which thou or thy heir must vomit up. Be no longer possessed with such a Devil, but cast him out ; and if he be too strong, weaken him by fasting, and exercise him by prayer.

This Prayer.

O GOD, that art the fulness of all riches, and magazine of all treasure, in the enjoyment of Whose favour the smallest morsel is a rich inheritance, and the coarsest pulse is a large portion ; without Whose blessing the greatest plenty enriches not, and the highest diet nourishes not ; how have I (an earth-worm, and no man) fixed my whole heart upon this transitory world, and neglected Thee the only desirable good ! I blush, O Lord, to confess the baseness of my life, and am utterly ashamed of mine own foolishness. I have placed my affections upon the nasty rubbish of this world, and have slighted the inestimable Pearl of my salvation. I have wallowed in the mire of my inordinate desires, and refused to be washed in the streams of Thy compassion. I have put my confidence in the faithfulness of my servant, and have doubted the providence of Thee my gracious Father. I have served unrighteous mammon with greediness, and have preferred dross and dung before the Pearly gates of New Jerusalem. Thou hast promised to be all in all to those that fear Thee, and not to fail the soul that trusts in Thee ; but I refused Thy gracious offer, and put my confidence in the vanity of the creature. But, gracious God, to Whom repentance never comes unseasonable, that findest an ear when sinners find a tongue, regard the contrition

of a bleeding heart, and withdraw not thy mercy from a pensive soul. Give me new thoughts, O God, and with Thy Holy Spirit new mould my desires. Inform my will, and sanctify my affections, that they may relish Thy sweetness with a full delight. Create in me, O God, a spiritual sense, that I may take a pleasure in things that are above. Give me a contented thankfulness for what I have, that I may neither in poverty forsake Thee, nor in plenty forget Thee. Arm me with continual patience, that I may cheerfully put my trust in Thy providence. Moderate my care for momentary things, that I may use the world as if I used it not. Let not the loss of any earthly good too much deject me, lest I should sin with my lips and charge Thee foolishly. Give me a charitable hand, O God, and fill my heart with brotherly compassion, that I may cheerfully exchange the corruptible treasure of this world into the incorruptible riches of the world to come; and proving a faithful steward in Thy spiritual household, I may give up my account with joy, and be made partaker of Thy eternal joy in the kingdom of Thy glory.

S. Chrysost.

The vessel of our desires grows greater under our endeavours to fill it.

We brought nothing into the world, and we shall carry nothing out with us.

The Self-lover's Self-fraud.

GOD hath required my heart, and he shall have it: God hath commanded truth in the inward parts, and he shall be obeyed. My soul shall praise the Lord, and all that is within me, and I will serve Him in the strength of my desires. And in common cases the tongue's profession of His name is no less than necessary: but when it lies upon a life, upon the saving of a livelihood, upon the flat undoing of a reputation, the case is altered. My life is dear, my fair possessions precious, and my reputation is the very apple of my eye. To save so great a stake, methinks equivocation is but venal, if a sin. If the true loyalty of mine heart stands sound to my religion and my God, my well-informed conscience tells me that in such extremities my frightened tongue may take the priviledge of a salvo, or a mental reservation, if not in the expression of a fair compliance. What? Shall the real breach of a holy sabbath, dedicated to God's highest glory, be tolerated for the welfare of an ox? may that breach be set upon the score of mercy, and commended above sacrifice, for the safeguard of an ass? And may I not dispense with a bare lip-denial of my urged religion for the necessary preservation of the threatened life of a man? For the saving of the whole livelihood and subsistence of a Christian?

What? Shall I perish for want of food, and die a martyr to that foolish conscience which forbids me to rub the ears of a little standing corn? Jacob could purchase his sick father's blessing with a downright lie, and may I not dissemble for a life? The young man's great possessions taught his timorous tongue to shrink from and decline his heart's profession, and who could blame him? Come, if thou freely give thy house, canst thou in conscience be denied a hiding-room for thy protection? The Syrian Captain (he whose heart was fixed on his now firm resolved and true devotion) reserved the house of Rimmon for his necessary attendance, and yet went in peace. Peter, (upon the rock of whose confession the church was grounded) to save his liberty, with a false, nay with a perjured tongue, nay more, at such a time when as the Lord of life (in whose behalf he drew his sword) was questioned for His innocent life, denied his Master; and shall I be so great an unthrift of my blood, my life, to lose it for a mere lip-denial of that religion which now is settled, and needs no blood to seal it?

This Retribution,

But stay, my conscience checks me, there is a judgment thunders; hark!

MATTHEW X. 33.

Whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father which is in Heaven.

His Proofs.**2 TIMOTHY III. 1. 2.**

***K*NOW that in the last days perilous times shall come: for men shall be lovers of their own selves.**

ISAIAH XLV. 23.

I have sworn by Myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in Righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.

ROMANS X. 10.

With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

LUKE IX. 26.

Whosoever shall be ashamed of Me and My words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed when He shall come in His Glory.

August.

The love of God and the world are two different things. If the love of this world dwell in thee, the love of God forsakes thee. Renounce that, and receive this. It is fit the more nobler love should have the best place and acceptance.

Theoph.

It is not enough only to believe with the heart, for God will have us confess with our mouth. Every one that confesses that Christ is God, shall find Christ professing to the Father, that man is a faithful servant; but those that deny Christ shall receive that fearful doom, (Nescio vos) I know you not.

This Soliloquy.

MY soul, in such a time as this, when the civil sword is warm with slaughter, and the wasting kingdom welters in her blood,* wouldest thou not give thy life to ransom her from ruin? Is not the God of heaven and earth worth many kingdoms? Is thy welfare more considerable than His glory? Darest thou deny Him for thy own ends, that denied thee nothing for thy good? Is a poor clod of earth we call inheritance prizeable with his greatness? Or a puff of breath we call life valuable with His honour, in comparison of Whom the very Angels are impure? Blush, O my soul, at thy own guilt. He that accounted His blood, His life not worth the keeping, to ransom thee, a wretch, lost by thy own rebellion, deserves He not the abatement of a lust, to keep Him from a new crucifying? My soul, if religion bind thee not, if judgments terrify thee not, if natural affection incline thee not, yet let common reason persuade thee to love Him above a trifle, that loved thee above His life. And thou that hast so often denied Him, deny thyself for ever, and He will own thee; repent, and He will pardon thee; pray to Him, and He will hear thee.

Anon.

He that loves himself most, hath of all men the happiness to have the fewest rivals.

* Written during the Civil Wars of Charles the First's reign.

This Prayer.

O GOD, Whose glory is the end of my creation, and Whose free mercy is the cause of my redemption; that gavest thy Son, thy only Son, to die for me, who else had perished in the common deluge of Thy wrath; what shall I render for so great a mercy? What thankfulness shall I return for so infinite a love? Alas! the most that I can do is nothing; the best that I can present is worse than nothing, sin. Lord, if I yield my body for a sacrifice, I offer nothing but a lump of filth and loathsome putrefaction: or if I give my soul in contribution, I yield Thee nothing but Thy image quite defaced and polluted with my lusts; or if I spend the strength of the whole man, and with both heart and tongue confess and magnify Thy Name, how can the praises of my sinful lips, that breath from such a sink, be pleasing to Thee? But, Lord, since Thou art pleased in Thy well-pleasing Son to accept the poverty of my weak endeavours, send down Thy Holy Spirit into my heart, cleanse it from the filth of my corruptions, and make it fit to praise Thee. Lord, open Thou my mouth, and my lips shall shew forth Thy praise. Put a new song into my mouth, and I will praise Thee and confess Thee all day long. I will not hide Thy goodness in my mouth, but will be shewing forth Thy truth and Thy salvation. Let Thy praises be my honour, and

let Thy goodness be the subject of my undaunted song. Let neither reputation, wealth, nor life, be precious to me in comparison with Thee. Let not the world's derision daunt me, nor examples of infirmity deject me. Give me courage and wisdom to stand for Thy honour; O make me worthy, able and willing to suffer for Thy name. Lord, teach me to deny myself, and to resist the motions of my own corruptions. Create in me, O God, a single heart, that I may love the Lord Jesus in sincerity. Remember not, O Lord, the sins of my fear, and pardon the hypocrisy of my self-love. Wash me from the stains and guilt of this my heinous offence, and deliver me from this fearful judgment Thou hast threatened in Thy word. Convince all the arguments of my unsanctified wit, whereby I have become an advocate to my sin. Grant that my life may adorn my profession, and make my tongue an instrument of Thy glory. Assist me, O God, that I may praise Thy goodness, and declare Thy wonders among the children of men. Strengthen my faith, that it may trust Thee; and let my works so shine, that men may praise Thee: that my heart believing unto righteousness, and my tongue confessing to salvation, I may be acknowledged by Thee here, and glorified by Thee in the Kingdom of Glory.

Sa.

He that pleaseth himself pleaseth a fool.

The Worldly Man's Verdure.

BUT aught I see, the case is even the same with him that prays, and him that does not pray; with him that swears, and him that fears an oath. I see no difference; if any, those that they call the wicked have the advantage; their crops are even as fair, their flocks as numerous as theirs that wear the ground with their religious knees, and fast their bodies to a skeleton; nay, in the use of blessings (which only makes them so) they far exceed. They term me reprobate, and style me unregenerate. 'Tis true, I eat my labours with a jolly heart, drink frolick cups, sweeten my pains with time-beguiling sports, make the best advantage of my own, pray when I think on't, swear when they urge me, hear sermons at my leisure, follow the lusts of my own eyes, and take the pleasure of my own ways: and yet, God be thanked, my barns are furnished, my sheep stand sound; my cattle strong for labour, my pastures rich and flourishing, my body healthful, and my bags are full; whilst they that are so pure, and make such conscience of their ways, that run to sermons, fig to lectures, pray thrice a day by the hour, hold 'faith!' and 'troth!' profane, and drinking healths a sin, do often find lean harvests, easy flocks and empty purses. Let them be godly that can live on air and faith, and eaten up by zeal can whine themselves into an hospital, or bless their

lips with charitable scraps. If godliness have this reward, to have short meals for long prayers, weak estates for strong faiths, and good consciences upon such bad conditions, let them boast of their penny-worths, and let me be wicked still, and take my chance as falls. Let me have judgment to discover a profitable farm, and wit to take it at an easy rent, and gold to stock it in a liberal manner, and skill to manage it to my best advantage, and luck to find a good increase, and providence to husband wisely what I gain: I seek no further, and I wish no more. Husbandry and religion are two several occupations, and look two several ways, and he is the only wise man that can reconcile them.

This Withering.

But stay, my soul, I fear thy reckoning fails thee. If thou hast judgment to discover, wit to bargain, gold to employ, skill to manage, providence to dispose; Canst thou command the clouds to drop? Or if a wet season meet thy harvest, and with open sluices overwhelm thy hopes, canst thou let down the flood-gates, and stop the watery flux? Canst thou command the sun to shine? Canst thou forbid the mildews, or control the breath of the malignant east? Is not this God's sole prerogative? And hath not that God said.

PSALM XCII. 7.

When the workers of iniquity do flourish, it is that they shall be destroyed for ever.

His Proofs.

JOB XXI. 7.

- WHEREFORE do the wicked live, become old,
yea, are mighty in power?*
8. *Their seed is established in their sight with them,
and their offspring before their eyes.*
 9. *Their houses are safe from fear, neither is the
rod of God upon them.*
 10. *Their bull gendereth, and faileth not ; their cow
calveth, and casteth not her calf.*
 11. *They send forth their little ones like a flock, and
their children dance.*
 12. *They take the timbrel and harp, and rejoice
at the sound of the organ.*
 13. *They spend their days in wealth, and in a
moment go down to the grave.*

Nil. in Parænes.

*Woe be to him that pursues empty and fading
pleasures : because in a short time he fats and
pampers himself as a calf to the slaughter.*

Bernard.

*There is no misery more true and real than false and
counterfeit pleasure.*

Hieron.

*It is not only difficult, but impossible, to have heaven
here and hereafter ; to live in sensual lusts, and to
attain spiritual bliss ; to pass from one paradise
to another ; to be a mirror of felicity in both
worlds ; to shine with glorious rays both in this
globe of earth, and the orb of heaven.*

This Soliloquy.

HOW sweet a feast is till the reckoning come! A fair day ends often in a cold night, and the road that is pleasant ends in hell. If worldly pleasures had the promise of continuance, prosperity were some comfort; but in this necessary vicissitude of good and evil, the prolonging of adversity sharpens it. It is no common thing, my soul, to enjoy two heavens: Dives found it in the present, Lazarus in the future. Hath thy increase met with no damage? Thy reputation with no scandal? Thy pleasure with no cross? Thy prosperity with no adversity? Presume not: God's checks are symptoms of His mercy; but His silence is the harbinger of judgment. Be circumspect and provident, my soul. Hast thou a fair summer? Provide for a hard winter: the world's river ebbs alone; it flows not: he that goes merrily with the stream, must hale up. Flatter thyself therefore no longer in thy prosperous sin, O my deluded soul, but be truly sensible of thy own presumption. Look serious into thy approaching danger, and humble thyself with true contrition. If thou procure sour herbs, God will provide his passover.

This Prayer.

HOW weak is man, O God, when Thou forsakes him ! How foolish are his counsels, when he plots without Thee ! How wild his progress when he wanders from Thee ! How miserable till he return unto Thee ! How his wit fails ! How his wisdom faulters ! How his wealth melts ! How his providence is befooled ! And how his soul beslaved ! Thou strikest off the chariot wheels of his inventions, and he is perplexed : Thou confoundest the Babel of his imaginations, and he is troubled. Thou crossest his designs, that he may fear Thee ; and Thou stoppest him in his ways, that he may know Thee. How merciful art Thou, O God, and in Thy very judgments, Lord, how gracious ! Thou mightest have struck me into the lowest pit as easily as on these bended knees, and yet been justified in my confusion ; but Thou hast threatened like a gentle Father, as loth to punish Thy ungracious child. Thou knowest the crooked thoughts of man are vain, still turning point to their contrivers ruin. Thou sawest me wandering in the maze of death, whilst I with violence pursued my own destruction. But Thou hadst warned me by Thy sacred word, and took me off that I might live to praise Thee. Thou art my confidence, O God ; Thou art the Rock, the Rock of my salvation. Thy

word shall be my guide, for all Thy paths are mercy and truth. Lord, when I look upon my former worldliness, I utterly abhor my conversation: strengthen me with Thy assistance, that I may lead a new life; make me more and more sensible of my own condition, and perfect Thou the good work Thou hast begun in me. In all my designs be Thou my counsellor, that I may prosper in my undertakings. In all my actions be Thou my guide, that I may keep the path of Thy commandments. Let all my own devices come to nought, lest I presume upon the arm of flesh: let not my wealth increase without Thy blessing, lest I be fatted up against the day of slaughter. Have Thou a hand in all my just employments, then prosper Thou the work of Thy hands; O prosper Thou Thy handywork, and make it mine, who have no interest in it till Thou own me as Thy child. Then shall my soul rejoice in Thy favours, and magnify Thy Name for all Thy mercies; then shall my lips proclaim Thy loving-kindness, and sing Thy praises for ever and for ever.

ECCLESIASTES XI. 9.

Walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.



The Lascivious Man's Heaven.

Can flesh and blood be so unnatural to forget the laws of nature? Can blushing youth immure itself within the icy walls of vestal chastity? Can lusty diet and mollitious rest bring forth no other fruits but faint desires, rigid thoughts, and phlegmatic conceits? Should we be stocks and stones, and (having active souls) turn altogether passives? Must we turn anchorites, and spend our days in caves and hermitages, and smother up our precious hours in cloistered folly, and recluse devotion? Can rosy cheeks, can ruby lips, can snowy breasts, and sparkling eyes, present their beauties and perfections to the sprightly view of young mortality? And must we stand like statues without sense or motion? Can strict religion impose such cruel tasks, and even impossible commands upon the raging thoughts of her unhappy votaries, as to withstand and contradict the instinct and very principles of nature? Can fair-pretending piety be so barbarous to condemn us to the flames of our affections, and make us martyrs to our own desires? Is it not enough to conquer the rebellious actions of imperious flesh, but must we manacle her hands, darken her eyes, nay worse, restrain the freedom of her very thoughts? Can full perfection be expected here? Or can our work be

perfect in this vale of imperfection? This were a life for angels, but a task too hard for frail, for transitory man. Come, come, we are but men, but flesh and blood, and our born frailties cannot grapple with such potent tyranny. What nature and necessity requires us to do, is venial being done. Come, strive no more against so strong a stream, but take thy fill of beauty; solace thy wanton heart with amorous contemplations; clothe all thy words with courtly rhetoric, and soften thy lips with dialects of love; surfeit thyself with pleasure, and melt thy passion into warm delights; walk into nature's universal bower, and pick what flower does most surprise thine eye; drink of all waters, but be tied to none; spare neither cost nor pains to compass thy desires. Enjoy varieties; em-paradise thy soul in fresh delights. The change of pleasure makes thy pleasure double. Ravish thy senses with perpetual choice, and glut thy soul with all the delicates of love.

This Well.

But hold! there is a voice that whispers in my troubled ear; a voice that blanks my thoughts, and stops the course of my resolves; a voice that chills the bosom of my soul, and fills me with amazement: Mark!

GALATIANS V. 21.

They which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

His Proofs.

EXODUS XX. 14.

THOU *shalt not commit adultery.*

MATTHEW V. 28.

Whosoever looketh upon a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart

ROMANS XIII. 13.

Let us walk honestly as in the day ; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness.

1 PETER II. 11.

Abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.

Nilus in Paraenes.*Woe be to the fornicator and adulterer, for his garment is defiled and spotted, and the heavenly bridegroom casts him out from his chaste nuptials.**A world of presumptuous and heinous offences do arise and spring from the filthy fountain of adulterous lust, whereby the gate of heaven is shut, and poor man excluded from God.*

S. Greg. Mor.

Hence the flesh lives in sensual delights for a moment, but the immortal soul perisheth for ever.

His Salutation.

LUST is a brand of original fire, raked up in the embers of flesh and blood, uncovered by a natural inclination, blown by corrupt communication, quenched with fasting and humiliation: it is raked up in the best, uncovered in the most, and blown in thee, O my lustful soul. O turn thine ear from the pleadings of nature, and make a covenant with thine eyes. Let not the language of Delilah enchant thee, lest the hands of the Philistines surprise thee. Review thy past pleasures, with the charge and pains thou hadst to compass them, and shew me, where is thy penny-worth? Foresee what punishments are prepared to meet thee, and tell me what is thy purchase? Thou hast bartered away thy God for a lust; sold thy eternity for a trifle. If this bargain may be recalled by tears, dissolve thee, O my soul, into a spring of waters; if to be reversed with price, reduce thy whole estate into a sackcloth and an ash-tub; thou whose liver hath scorched in the flames of lust, humble thy heart in the ashes of repentance: and as with Esau thou hast sold thy birthright for broth, so with Jacob, wrestle by prayer till thou get a blessing.

Anonym.

Consider well, how empty thy pleasure will be when it is past, and thou cuttest off the chief strength of the temptation.

This Prayer.

O GOD, before Whose face the angels are impure, before Whose clear omniscience all actions appear, to Whom the very secrets of the hearts are open; I here acknowledge, to Thy glory and my shame, the filthiness and vile impurity of my nature. Lord, I was filthy in my very conception, and in filthiness my mother's womb enclosed me, brought forth in filthiness, and filthy is my very innocency, filthy in the motions of my flesh, and filthy in the apprehensions of my soul, my words all clothed with filthiness, and in all my actions filthy and unclean, in my inclination filthy, and in the whole course of my life nothing but a continued filthiness. Wash me, O God, and make me clean, cleanse me from the filthiness of my corruption. Purge me, O Lord, with hyssop, and create a clean heart within me. Correct the vagrant motions of my flesh, and quench the fiery darts of Satan. Let not the law of my corrupted members rule me; O let concupiscence have no dominion over me. Give me courage to fight against my lusts, and give my weakness strength to overcome: make sharp my sword against this body of sin, but most against my Delilah, my bosom sin. Deliver me from the tyranny of temptation, or give me power to subdue it. Confine the liberty of my wanton appetite, and give me temperance in a sober diet. Grant me a heart to strive with Thee in prayer, and hopeful patience to attend

Thy leisure. Keep me from the habit of an idle life, and close mine ears against corrupt communication. Set Thou a watch before my lips, that all my words may savour of sobriety. Preserve me from the vanity and pride of life, that I may walk blameless in my conversation. Protect me from the fellowship of the unclean, and from all such as are of evil report. Let Thy grace, O God, be sufficient for me, to protect my soul from the buffetings of Satan. Make me industrious and diligent in my calling, lest the enemy get advantage over me. In all my temptations let me have recourse to Thee. Be Thou my refuge when I call upon Thee. Forgive, O God, the sins of my youth, O pardon the multitudes of my secret sins. Increase my hatred to my former life, and strengthen my resolution for the time future. Hear me, O God, and let the words of my mouth be always acceptable to Thee, O God, my strength and my Redeemer.

S. Hierom,

Pleasure leaves behind it a greater thirst than that which it pretends to quench; and though it be taken in a full draught, yet does not satisfy.

PROVERBS VI. 27.

Can a man take fire into his bosom, and his clothes not be burned?



The Sabbath-breaker's Profanation.

But glittering prince that sits upon his regal and imperial throne, and the ignoble peasant that sleeps within his sordid house of thatch, are both alike to God. An ivory temple and a church of clay are prized alike by Him. The flesh of bulls and the perfumes of myrrh and cassia smoke His altars with an equal pleasure. And does He make such difference of days? Is He, that was so weary of the new moons, so taken with the sun, as to tie His Sabbath to that only day? The tenth in tithes is any one in ten, and why the seventh day not any one in seven? We sanctify the day, the day not us. But are we Jews? Are we still bound to keep a legal Sabbath in the strictness of the letter? Have the gentiles no privilege by the virtue of Messiah's coming? Or has the evangelical Sabbath no immunities? The service done, the day is discharged, my liberty restored: and if I meet my profits or my pleasures then, I will give them entertainment. If business call me to account, I dare afford a careful ear; or if my sports invite me, I will entertain them with a cheerful heart. I will go to matins with as much devotion as my neighbour; I will make as low obeisance and as just responds as any: but as soon as Even-song is ended, my church devotion and my psalter shall sanctify my pew

till the next Sabbath call. Were it no more for an old custom's sake than for the good I find in Sabbaths, that ceremony might as well be spared. It is a day of rest: and what is a rest? A relaxation from the toil of labour. And what is labour but a painful exercise of the frail body? But where the exercise admits no toil, there relaxation makes no rest. What labour is it for the worldly man to compass sea and land to accomplish his desires? What labour is it for the impatient lover to measure Hellespont with his widened arms to hasten his delight? What labour for the youth to number music with their sprightly paces? Where leisure is reconciled to labour, labour is but an active rest. Why should the Sabbath then, a day of rest, divorce from those delights that make thy rest? Afflict their souls that please; my rest shall be what most conduces to my hearts delight. Two hours will vent more prayers than I shall need, the rest remains for pleasure.

This Extirpation,

Conscience, why startest thou? A judgment strikes me from the mouth of Heaven, and saith

EXODUS XXXI. 14.

Whosoever doeth any work on My Sabbath, that soul shall be cut off.

His Proofs.

EXODUS XX 8, 9, &c.

REMEMBER the Sabbath day to keep it holy ; six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work : but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord, &c.

EXODUS XXXI. 13, 14.

Verily My Sabbaths ye shall keep, for it is a sign between me and you, throughout your generations. Ye shall keep the Sabbath, for it is holy unto you.

LUKE XXIII. 56.

And they returned and prepared spices and ointments, and rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment.

Gregor.

We ought upon the Lord's day to rest from bodily labour, and wholly to addict ourselves to prayers ; that whatsoever hath been done amiss the week before, may, upon the day of our Lord's resurrection, be expiated and purged by fervent prayers.

Cyr. Alex.

Sin is the storehouse of death and misery, it kindles flames for its dearest friends. Therefore whosoever, when he should rest from sin, busieth himself in the dead and fruitless works of wickedness, and renouncing all piety, lusts after such things as will bring him into eternal destruction and everlasting flames, justly deserves to die and perish with the damned : because when he might have enjoyed a pious rest, he laboured to run headlong to his own destruction.

His Soliloquie.

MY soul, how has thou profaned that day thy God hath sanctified ! how hast thou encroached on that which Heaven hath set apart ! if thy impatience cannot act a Sabbath twelve hours, what happiness canst thou expect in a perpetual Sabbath ? Is six days too little for thyself, and two hours too much for thy God ? O my soul, how dost thou prize temporals beyond eternals ? Is it equal, that God Who gave thee a body, and six days to provide for it, should demand one day of thee, and be denied it ? How liberal a receiver art thou, and how miserable a requiter ? But know, my soul, His Sabbaths are the apple of His eye. He that hath power to vindicate the breach of it, hath threatened judgments to the breaker thereof. The God of mercy that hath mitigated the rigour of it for charity's sake, will not diminish the honour of it for profaneness' sake. Forget not then, my soul, to remember His Sabbaths, and remember not to forget His judgments, lest He forget to remember thee in mercy. What thou hast neglected, bewail with contrition ; and what thou hast repented, forsake with resolution ; and what thou hast resolved, strengthen with devotion.

Anonym.

The true Sabbath is to rest from sin.

His Prayer.

O ETERNAL, just and all-discerning Judge! in Thy-self glorious; in Thy Son gracious; Who triest without a witness, and condemnest without a jury; oh! I confess my very actions have betrayed me. Thy word hath brought in evidence against me; my own conscience hath witnessed against me; and Thy judgment hath past sentence against me: and what have I now to plead but my own misery? And whither should that misery flee but to the God of mercy? And since, O Lord, the way to mercy is to leave myself, I here disclaim all interest in myself, and utterly renounce myself. I, that was created for Thy glory, have dishonoured Thy Name: I, that was made for Thy service, have profaned Thy Sabbaths: I have slighted Thy ordinances, and turned my back upon Thy sanctuary. I have neglected Thy sacraments, abused Thy word, despised Thy ministers, and contemned their ministry. I have come into Thy courts with an unprovided heart, and have drawn near with uncircumcised lips. And, Lord, I know Thou art a jealous God, and most severe against all such as violate Thy Rest. The glory of Thy Name is precious to Thee, and Thine honour is as the apple of Thine eye. But Thou, O God, that art the God of hosts, hast published and declared Thyself the Lord of mercy. The constitution of Sabbath was a work of

time: but, Lord, Thy mercy is from all eternity. I, that have broken thy Sabbath, do here present Thee with a broken heart: Thy hand is not shortened that Thou canst not heal, nor Thy ear deafened that Thou canst not hear. Stretch forth Thine hand, O God, and heal my wounds; bow down Thine ear, O Lord, and hear my prayers. Alter the fabric of my sinful heart, and make it tender of Thy glory. Make me ambitious of Thy service, and let Thy Sabbaths be my whole delight. Give me a holy reverence of Thy word, that it may prove a light to my steps and a lantern to my feet. Endue my heart with charity and faith, that I may find a comfort in Thy sacraments. Bless Thou the ministers of Thy sacred word, and make them holy in their lives, sound in their doctrine, and laborious in their callings. Preserve the universal church in these distracted times; give her peace, unity, and uniformity; purge her of all schism, error, and superstition. Let the kings daughter be all glorious within, and let Thine eyes take pleasure in her beauty; that, being honoured here to be a member of her militant, I may be glorified with her triumphant.

Anonym.

He that thinks it too much to keep a short Sabbath here, shall never be thought worthy to celebrate the eternal Sabbath hereafter.



The Censorious Man's Crimination.

In him there is much of the seed of the serpent in him by his very looks, if his words betrayed him not. He hath eaten the egg of the cockatrice, and surely he remaineth in the state of perdition. He is not within the covenant, and abideth in the gall of bitterness. His studied prayers shew him to be a high malignant, and his Jesu-worship concludes him popishly affected. He comes not to our private meetings, nor contributes a penny to the cause. He cries up learning and the book of common prayer, and takes no arms to hasten reformation. He fears God for his own ends, for the spirit of Antichrist is in him. His eyes are full of adulteries, he goes a whoring after his own inventions. He can hear an oath from his superior without reproof, and the heathenish Gods named without spitting in his face. Wherefore my soul detesteth him, and I will have no conversation with him: for what fellowship hath light with darkness, or the pure in heart with the unclean? Sometimes he is a Publican; sometimes a Pharisee; and always an hypocrite. He rails against the altar as loud as we, and yet he cringes and makes an idol of the name of Jesus: he is quicksighted at the infirmities of the saints, and in his heart rejoiceth at our failings: he honours not a preaching ministry, and

too much leans to a church government: he paints devotion on his face, whilst pride is stamped within his heart: he places sanctity in the walls of a steeple-house, and adores the sacrament with his popish knee: his religion is a weather-cock, and turns breast to every blast of wind. With the pure he seems pure, and with the wicked he will join in fellowship. A sober language is in his mouth, but the poison of asps is under his tongue. His works conduce not to edification, nor are the motions of his heart sanctified. He adores great ones for preferment, and speaks too partially of authority. He is a Laodicean in his faith, a Nicolaitan in his works, a Pharisee in his disguise, a rank papist in his heart; and I thank my God I am not as this man.

His Commination.

But stay, my soul, take heed whilst thou judgest another, lest God judge thee: how comest thou so expert in anothers heart, being so often deceived in thine own? A Saul to day may prove a Paul tomorrow. Take heed, whilst thou wouldest seem religious, thou appear not uncharitable; and whilst thou judgest man, thou be not judged of God, who saith,

MATTHEW VII. 1.

Judge not, that ye be not judged.

His Proofs.

JOHN VII. 24.

JUDGE not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.

ROMANS XIV. 10.

But why dost thou judge thy brother? Or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ.

1 CORINTHIANS IV. 5.

Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts.

ROMANS XIV. 13.

Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling-block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.

God is Judge Himself. Psalm 1. 6.

S. August.

Apparent and notorious iniquities ought both to be reprobated and condemned; but we should never judge such things as we understand not, nor can certainly know whether they be done with a good or evil intent.

S. August.

When thou knowest not apparently, judge charitably; because it is better to think well of the wicked, than by frequent censuring to suspect an innocent man guilty of an offence.

S. August.

The unrighteous judge shall be justly condemned.

This Soliloquie.

HAS thy brother, O my soul, a beam in his eye, and hast thou no mote in thine? Clear thine own, and thou wilt see the better to cleanse his. If a thief be in his candle, blow it not out, lest thou wrong the flame: but if thy snuffers be of gold, snuff it. Has he offended thee? Forgive him. Hath he trespassed against the congregation? Reprove him. Hath he sinned against God? Pray for him. O my soul, how uncharitable hast thou been? How pharisaically hast thou judged? Being sick of the jaundice, how hast thou censured another yellow? And with blotted fingers made his blur the greater? How has the pride of thine own heart blinded thee toward thyself? How quick-sighted to another? Thy brother has slipped, but thou hast fallen; and hast blanched thy impiety with the publishing his sin. Like a fly, thou stinges his sores, and feedest on his corruptions. Jesus came eating and drinking, and was judged a glutton: John came fasting, and was challenged with a devil. Judge not, my soul, lest thou be judged: malign not thy brother, lest God laugh at thy destruction. Wouldest thou escape the punishment? Judge thyself: wouldest thou avoid the sin? Humble thyself.

His Prayer.

O GOD that art the only Searcher of the reins, to Whom the secrets of the heart of man are only known, to Whom alone the judgment of our thoughts, our words, and deeds belong, and to Whose sentence we must stand or fall ; I, a presumptuous sinner, that have thrust into Thy place, and boldly have presumed to execute Thy office, do here as humbly confess the insolence of mine attempt, and with a sorrowful heart repent me of my doings. And though my convinced conscience can look for nothing from Thy wrathful hand but the same measure which I measured to another, yet in the confidence of that mercy which Thou hast promised to all those that truly repent and unfeignedly believe, I am become an humble suitor for Thy gracious pardon. Lord, if Thou search me but with a favourable eye, I shall appear much more unrighteous in Thy sight than this my uncharitably condemned brother did in mine. O look not, therefore, Lord, upon me as I am, lest Thou abhor me ; but, through the merits of my blessed Saviour cast a gracious eye upon me. Let His humility satisfy for my presumption, and let His meritorious sufferings answer for my vile uncharitableness. Let not the voice of my offence provoke Thee with a stronger cry than the language of His intercession. Remove from me, O God, all spiritual pride, and make me little in

my own conceit. Lord, light me to myself, that by Thy light I may discern how dark I am. Lighten that darkness by Thy Holy Spirit, that I may search into my own corruptions. And since, O God, all gifts and graces are but nothing, and nothing can be acceptable in Thy sight, without charity, quicken the dulness of my faint affections, that I may love my brother as I ought. Soften my marble heart that it may melt at his infirmities. Make me careful in the examination of my own ways, and most severe against my own offences. Pull out the beam out of mine own eye, that I may see clearly, and reprove wisely. Take from me, O Lord, all grudging, envy, and malice, that my seasonable reproofs may win my brother. Preserve my heart from all censorious thoughts, and keep my tongue from striking at his name. Grant that I make right use of his infirmities, and read good lessons in his failings; that loving him in Thee, and Thee in him, according to Thy command, we may both be united in Thee as members of Thee, that Thou mayest receive honour from our communion here, and we eternal glory from Thee hereafter in the world to come.

Th. de Kempis.

There are two lessons which God every day gives His elect: one, to see their own faults; the other, the goodness of God.



The Liar's Fallacies.

Must, if religion be so strict a law, to bind my tongue to the necessity of a truth on all occasions, at all times, and in all places, the gate is too strait for me to enter; or if the general rules of downright truth will admit no few exceptions, farewell all honest mirth, farewell all trading, farewell the whole converse between man and man. If always to speak punctual truth be the symptom of a blessed soul, Tom Tell-truth has a happy time, and fools and children are the only men. If truth sit regent, in what faithful breast shall secrets find repose? What kingdom can be safe? What commonwealth can be secure? What war can be successful? What stratagem can prosper? If bloody times should force religion to shroud itself beneath my roof, upon demand, shall my false truth betray it? Or shall my brother's life, or shall my own be seized upon through the cruel truth of my downright confession? Or rather not be secured by a fair officious lie? Shall the righteous favourite* of Egypt's tyrant by virtue of a loud lie sweeten out his joy, and heighten up his soft affection with the antiperistasis of tears? And may I not prevaricate with a sullen truth to save a brother's life from a blood-thirsty hand? Shall Jacob and his too indulgent mother conspire in a lie to purchase a paternal blessing in the false name and habit of a supplanted brother? And shall I question to preserve the granted

*Genesis xliv.

blessing of a life or livelihood with a harmless lie ? Come, come, my soul, let not thy timorous conscience check at such poor things as these. So long as thy officious tongue aims at a just end, a lie is no offence: so long as thy perjurious lips confirm not thy untruth with an audacious brow, thou needst not fear. The weight of the cause relieves the burden of the crime. Is thy centre good ? No matter how crooked the lines of the circumference be; policy allows it. If thy journeys end be heaven, it matters not how full of hell thy journey be; divinity allows it. Wilt thou condemn the Egyptian midwives for saving the infant Israelites by so merciful a lie ? When martial execution is to be done, wilt thou fear to kill ? When hunger drives thee to the gates of death, wilt thou be afraid to steal ? When civil wars divide a kingdom, will Mercuries decline a lie ? No; circumstances excuse, as well as make the lie. Had Cæsar, Scipio, or Alexander been regulated by such strict divinity, their names had been as silent as their dust. A lie is but a fair put-off, the sanctuary of a secret, the riddle of a lover, the stratagem of a soldier, the policy of a statesman, and a salve for many desperate sores.

His Flame.

But hark, my soul, there's something rounds mine ear, and calls my language to a recantation. The Lord hath spoken it,

REVELATIONS XXI. 8.

Liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone.

His Proofs.

EXODUS XXIII. 1.

THOU shalt not raise a false report.

LEVITICUS XIX. 11.

Ye shall not deal falsely; neither lie one to another.

PROVERBS XII. 22.

Lying lips are abomination to the Lord: but they that deal truly are His delight.

PROVERBS XIX. 5.

He that speaketh lies shall not escape.

EPHESIANS IV. 25.

Put away lying, and let every one speak truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.

REVELATIONS XXI. 27.

*There shall in no wise enter into the new Jerusalem anything that worketh abomination, or that maketh a lie.***S. August.***Whosoever thinks there is any kind of lie that is not a sin, shamefully deceives himself, mistaking a lying or cozening knave for a square or honest man.*

Gregor.

Eschew and avoid all falsehood: though sometime certain kinds of untruth are less sinful, as to tell a lie to save a man's life; yet because the scripture saith,—“The liar slayeth his own soul, and God will destroy them that tell a lie,”—therefore religious and honest men should always avoid even the best sort of lies; neither ought another man's life to be secured by our falsehood or lying, lest we destroy our own soul in labouring to secure another man's life.

Bis Solilouquie.

WHAT a child, O my soul, hath thy false bosom harboured ! And what reward can thy indulgence expect from such a father ? What blessing canst thou hope from Heaven, that pleadest for the son of the devil, and crucifiest the Son of God ? God is the Father of truth. To secure thy estate, thou deniest the truth by framing of a lie : to save thy brother's life thou opposest the truth in justifying a lie. Now tell me, O my soul, art thou worthy the name of a Christian, that deniest and opposest the nature of Christ ? Art thou worthy of Christ, that preferrest thy estate or thy brother's life before Him ? O my unrighteous soul, canst thou hold thy brother worthy of death for giving thee the lie, and thyself guiltless that makest a lie ? Aye, but in some cases truth destroys thy life ; a lie preserves it. My soul, was God thy Creator ? Then make not the devil thy preserver. Wilt thou despair to trust Him with thy life that gave it, and make him thy protector that seeks to destroy it ? Reform thee and repent thee, O my soul ; hold not thy life on such conditions, but trust thee to the hands that made thee.

S. Hierom.

Let not thy tongue know how to lie or swear : and let there be in thee so great a love of truth, that thou account whatever thou sayest as sealed with an oath.

This Prayer.

O GOD, that art the God of truth, Whose word is truth, that hatest lying lips, and abominatest the deceitful tongue, that banishest Thy presence all such as love or make a lie, and lovest truth, and requirest uprightness in the inward parts, I the most wretched of the sons of men, and most unworthy to be called Thy son, make bold to cast my sinful eyes to heaven. Lord, I have sinned against Heaven and against truth, and have turned Thy grace into a lie. I have renounced the ways of righteousness, and have harboured much iniquity within me, which hath turned Thy wrath against me. I have transgressed against the checks of my own conscience, and have vaunted of my transgression: which way soever I turn my eye, I see no object but shame and confusion. Lord, when I look upon myself, I find nothing there but fuel for Thy wrath, and matter for Thine indignation and my condemnation. And when I cast mine eyes to heaven, I there behold an angry God, and a severe revenger. But, Lord, at Thy right hand I see a Saviour and a sweet Redeemer. I see Thy wounded Son clothed in my flesh, and bearing mine infirmities, and interceding for my numerous transgressions; for which my soul doth magnify Thee, O God, and my spirit rejoiceth in Him my Saviour. Lord, when Thou lookest upon the vast score of my offences, turn Thine eyes upon the infinite merits of His satisfaction.

O when Thy justice calls to mind my sins, let not Thy mercy forget His sufferings. Wash me, O wash me in His blood, and Thou shalt see me clothed in His righteousness. Let Him that is all in all to me, be all and all for me; make Him to me sanctification, justification, and redemption. Inspire my heart with the spirit of Thy truth, and preserve me from the deceitfulness of double tongues. Give me an inward confidence to rely upon Thy fatherly providence, that neither fear may deter me, nor any advantage may turn me from the ways of Thy truth. Let not the specious goodness of the end encourage me to the unlawfulness of the means, but let Thy Word be the warrant to all my actions. Guide my footsteps that I may walk uprightly, and quicken my conscience that it may reprove my failings. Cause me to feel the burthen of this my habitual sin, that coming to Thee by a true and serious repentance, my sins may obtain a full and gracious forgiveness. Give me a heart to make a covenant with my lips: that both my heart and tongue being sanctified by Thy Spirit, may be both united in truth by Thy mercy, and magnify Thy Name for ever and ever.

Str.

He that is afraid to tell the truth, denieth himself to be a man.



The Revengeful Man's Rage.

DWHAT a julep to my scorching soul, is the delicious blood of my offender ! And how it cools the burning fever of my boiling veins ! It is the quintessence of pleasures, the height of satisfaction, and the very marrow of all delight, to bathe and paddle in the blood of such, whose bold affronts have turned my wounded patience into fury. How full of sweetness was his death, who dying was revenged upon three thousand enemies ? How sweetly did the younger brother's blood allay the soul-consuming flames of the elder, who took more pleasure in his last breath, than Heaven did in his first sacrifice ! Yet had not Heaven condemned his action, nature had found an advocate for his passion. What sturdy spirit hath the power to rule his suffering thoughts, or curb the headstrong fury of his irascible affections ? Or who but fools (that cannot taste an injury) can moderate their high-bred spirits, and stop their passion in her full career ? Let heavy cynicks, they whose leaden souls are taught by stupid reason to stand bent at every wrong, that can digest an injury more easily than a compliment, that can protest against the laws of nature, and cry all natural affection down, let them be and-irons for the injurious world to work a heat upon ; let them find shoulders to receive the painful stripes of peevish mortals, and to bear the

wrongs of daring insolence ; let them be drawn like calves prepared for slaughter, and bow their servile necks to sharp destruction ; let them submit their slavish bosoms to be trodden and trampled under foot at every one's pleasure. My eagle spirit flies a higher pitch, and like ambitious Phaeton climbs into the fiery chariot, and, drawn with Fury, Scorn, Revenge, and Honour, rambles through all the spheres, and brings with it confusion and combustion : my reeking sword shall vindicate my reputation, and rectify the injuries of my honourable name, and quench itself in the plenteous streams of blood. Come, tell me not of charity, conscience, or transgression. My charity reflects upon myself, begins at home, and guided by the justice of my passion, is bound to labour for an honourable satisfaction. My conscience is blood-proof, and I can broach a life with my illustrious weapon, with as little reluctance as kill a flea that sucks my blood without commission ; and can I drink a health in blood upon my bended knee to reputation.

His Retaliation.

But hark, my soul, I hear a languishing, a dying voice cry up to Heaven for vengeance. It cries aloud, and thunders in my startling ear. I tremble, and my shivering bones are filled with horror. It cries against me : and hear what Heaven replies,

MATTHEW XXVI. 52.

All that take up the sword shall perish by the sword.

His Proofs.

LEVITICUS XIX. 18.

THOU shalt not avenge, or bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the Lord.

DEUTERONOMY XXXII. 35.

To Me belongeth vengeance and recompence.

EZEKIEL XXV. 12, 13.

Because that Edom hath dealt against the house of Judah, by taking vengeance, and hath greatly offended, and revenged himself upon them;

Therefore thus saith the Lord God, I will also stretch out mine hand upon Edom, and will cut off man and beast from it.

MATTHEW V. 39.

Resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.

Tertull.

What's the difference between one that doth an injury, and another that outrageously suffers it, except that the one is first, and the other second in the offence? But both are guilty of mutual injury in the sight of God, Who forbids every sin, and condemns the offender.

Idem.

How can we honour God, if we revenge ourselves?

Gloss.

Every man is a murderer, and shall be punished as Cain was, if he do, as Cain did, either assault his brother with violence, or pursue him with hatred.

This Soliloquie.

REVENGE is an act of the irascible affections, deliberated with malice, and executed without mercy. How often, O my soul, hast thou cursed thyself in the perfectest of prayers? How often hast thou turned the spiritual body of thy Saviour into thy damnation? Can the sun rise to thy comfort, that hath so often set in thy wrath? So long as thy wrath is kindled against thy brother, so long is the wrath of God burning against thee. O wouldest thou offer a pleasing sacrifice to Heaven? Go first and be reconciled to thy brother. Aye, but who shall right thy honour then? Is thy honour wronged? Forgive, and it is vindicated. Aye, but this kind of heart-swelling can brook no poultice but revenge. Take heed, my soul, the remedy is worse than the disease. If thy intricate distemper transcend thy power, make choice of a Physician that can purge that humor that foments thy malady. Rely upon Him; submit thy will to His directions: He hath a tender heart, a skilful hand, a watchful eye, that makes thy welfare the price of all His pains, expecting no reward, no fee, but praises and thanksgiving.

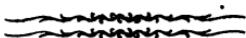
S. Bernard.

Be humble in asking of pardon, and easy in giving it, and thou wilt be at peace with all the world.

This Prayer.

O GOD Thou art the God of peace, and the lover of unity and concord, that dost command all those that seek forgiveness, to forgive; that hatest the froward heart, but shewest mercy to the meek in spirit; with what a face can I appear before Thy mercy-seat? Or with what countenance can I lift up these hands thus stained with my brother's blood? How can my lips that daily breed revenge against my brother, presume to own Thee as my Father, or expect from Thee Thy blessing as Thy child? If Thou forgive my trespasses, O God, as I forgive my trespassers, in what a miserable estate am I, that in my very prayers condemn myself, and do not only limit Thy compassion by my uncharitableness, but draw Thy judgments on my head for my rebellion? That heart, O God, which Thou requirest as a holy present, is become a spring of malice. These hands which I advance, are ready instruments of base revenge. My thoughts, that should be sanctified, are full of blood, and how to compass evil against my brother is my continual meditation. The course of all my life is wilful disobedience, and my whole pleasure, Lord, is to displease Thee. My conscience hath accused me, and the voice of blood hath cried against me: but, Lord, the blood of Jesus cries louder than the blood of Abel, and Thy mercy is far more infinite than my sin. The blood that was shed by me cries for vengeance, but the blood

that was shed for me sues for mercy. Lord, hear the language of this blood, and by the merits of this voice be reconciled unto me. That time which cannot be recalled, oh! give me power to redeem, and in the meantime, a settled resolution to reform. Suppress the violence of my headstrong passion, and establish a meek spirit within me. Let the sight of my own vileness take from me the sense of all disgrace, and let the crown of my reputation be Thy honour. Possess my heart with a desire of unity and concord, and give me patience to endure what my impenitency hath deserved. Breathe into my soul the spirit of love, and direct my affections to their right object: turn all my anger against that sin that hath provoked Thee, and give me holy revenge, that I may exercise it against myself. Grant that I may love Thee for Thyself, myself in Thee, and my neighbour as myself. Assist me, O God, that I may subdue all evil in myself, and suffer patiently all evil as a punishment from Thee. Give me a merciful heart, O God: make it slow to wrath and ready to forgive. Preserve me from the act of evil, that I may be delivered from the fear of evil; that living here in charity with men, I may receive that sentence of, "Come ye blessed" in the kingdom of glory.



The Secure Man's Triumph.

I now, my soul, thy happiness is entailed, and thy illustrious name shall live in thy succeeding generations. Thy dwelling is established in the fat of all the land ; thou hast what mortal heart can wish, and wantest nothing but immortality. The best of all the land is thine, and thou art planted in the best of lands. A land whose Constitutions make the best of Government ; which Government is strengthened with the best of Laws ; which Laws are executed by the best of Princes ; whose Prince, whose Laws, whose Government, whose Land, make us the happiest of all subjects, make us the happiest of all people. A land of strength, of plenty, and a land of peace ; where every soul may sit beneath his Vine, unfrighted at the horrid language of the hoarse trumpet, unstartled at the warlike summons of the roaring Cannon. A land whose beauty hath surprised the ambitious hearts of foreign Princes, and taught them by their martial oratory to make their vain attempts. A land whose strength reads vanity in the deceived hopes of Conquerors, and crowns their enterprises with a shameful overthrow. A land whose native plenty makes her the world's Exchange, supplying others, able to subsist without supply from foreign Kingdoms ; in itself happy, and abroad honourable. A land that hath no vanity but what, by accident proceeds and issues from the sweetest of all blessings, peace and plenty ;

that hath no misery but what is propagated from that blindness which cannot see her own felicity. A land that flows with milk and honey, and in brief, wants nothing to deserve the title of a paradise. The curb of Spain, the pride of Germany, the aid of Belgia, the scourge of France, the Empress of the World, the Queen of Nations. She is begirt with walls, whose builder was the hand of Heaven, whereon there daily rides a Navy-Royal, whose unconquerable power proclaims her Prince invincible, and whispers sad despair into the fainting hearts of foreign majesty. She is compact within herself in unity, not apt to civil discords or intestine broils: the envy of all nations, the ambition of all Princes, the terror of all enemies, the security of all neighbouring states. Let timorous Pulpits threaten ruin, let prophesying Churchmen dote, till I believe. How often and how long have these loud Sons of Thunder false-prophesied her desolation! and yet she stands the glory of the world. Can pride demolish the towers that defend her? Can Drunkenness dry up the Sea that walls her? Can flames of lust dissolve the Ordnances that protect her?

His Orritory.

Be well advised, my soul; there is a voice from Heaven roars louder than those Ordnances, which saith,

JEREMIAH IV. 27.

Thus saith the Lord, The whole land shall be desolate.

His Proofs.

ISAIAH XIV. 7. 15.

The whole Earth is at rest, and is quiet; they break forth into singing.

Yea the Fir trees rejoice at Thee, and the Cedars of Lebanon, etc.

Yet thou shalt be brought down to Hell, to the sides of the Pit.

JEREMIAH V. 12.

They have belied the Lord, and said, It is not He, neither shall evil come upon us, neither shall we see sword or famine.

1 CORINTHIANS X. 12.

Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

LUKE XVII. 27.

They did eat, they drank, and they married wives, and were given in marriage, until the flood came and destroyed them all.

S. August.

Whilst Lot was exercised in suffering reproach and violence, he continued holy and pure, even in the filth of Sodom: but in the mount, being in peace and safety, he was surprised by sensual security, and defiled himself with his own daughters.

Greg. Mag.

Our prosperous and happy state is often the occasion of more miserable ruin: a long peace hath made many men both careless and cowardly; and that's the most fatal blow when an unexpected enemy surpriseth us in a deep sleep of peace and security.

His Soliloquie.

SECURITY is an improvident carelessness, casting out all fear of approaching danger. It is like a great calm at sea, that fore-runs a storm. How is this verified, O my sad soul, in this our bleeding Nation ! Wert thou not till now for many years even nuzzled in the bosom of habitual peace ? Didst thou fore-see this danger ? or could'st thou have contrived a way to be thus miserable ? Didst thou not laugh invasion to scorn ? or didst thou not less fear a civil war ? Was not the title of the crown unquestionable ? and was not our mixed government unapt to fall into diseases ? Did we want good laws ? or did our laws want execution ? Did not our Prophets give lawful warning ? or were we moved at the sound of judgments ? How hast thou lived, O my uncareful soul, to see these Prophecies fulfilled, and to behold the vials of thy angry God poured forth ? Since mercies, O my soul, could not allure thee, yet let these judgments now at length enforce thee to a true repentance. Quench the fire-brand which thou hast kindled ; turn thy mirth to right mourning, and thy feasts of joy to humiliation.

Cassian.

There is no better expedient of security, than to commit all our interest to God, who knows how to give good things to them that ask Him.

This Prayer.

O GOD by whom Kings reign and Kingdoms flourish, that settest up where none can batter down, and pullest down where none can countermand ; I a most humble suiter at the Throne of Grace, acknowledge myself unworthy of the least of all thy mercies, nay, worthy of the greatest of all thy judgments. I have sinned against Thee, the Author of my being ; I have sinned against my conscience, which thou hast made my accuser ; I have sinned against the peace of this Kingdom, whereof thou hast made me a member : If all should do, O God, as I have done, Sodom would appear as righteous, and Gomorrah would be a precedent to thy wrath upon this sinful Nation. But, Lord, thy mercy is inscrutable, or else my misery were unspeakable : for that mercy sake be gracious to me in the free pardoning of all my offences. Blot them out of Thy remembrance for His sake in whom Thou art well pleased. Make my head a fountain of tears to quench that brand my sins have kindled towards the destruction of this flourishing Kingdom. Bless this Kingdom, O God ; establish it in piety, honour, peace, and plenty. Forgive all the crying sins, and remove all thy judgments far from her. Bless, bless her Governour, thy servant, our dread Sovereign. Endue his soul with all religious, civil, and princely virtues. Preserve his royal person in health, safety, and prosperity ; prolong his days in honour, peace or

victory, and crown his death with everlasting glory. Bless him in his royal consort ; unite their hearts in love and true Religion. Bless him in his princely issue ; season their youth with the fear of Thy name. Direct Thy Church in doctrine and in discipline ; and let her enemies be converted, or confounded. Purge her of all superstition and heresy ; and root out from her whatsoever thy hand hath not planted. Bless the Nobility of this land ; endue their hearts with truth, loyalty, and true policy. Bless the tribe of Levi with piety, learning, and humility. Bless the Magistrates of this Kingdom ; give them religious and upright hearts, hating covetousness. Bless the Gentry with sincerity, charity, and a good conscience. Bless the Commonalty with loyal hearts, painful hands, and plentiful increase. Bless the two great Seminaries of this Kingdom ; make them fruitful nurseries both to the Church and Commonwealth. Bless all thy Saints every where, especially those that stood in the gap betwixt this Kingdom and thy judgments ; that being all members of that body whereof Thou Christ art Head, we may all join in humiliation for our sins, and in the propagation of Thy honour here, and be made partakers of Thy glory in the Kingdom of glory hereafter.



The Presumptuous Man's Felicity.

Tell bawling babes of bugbears, to fright them into quietness ; or terrify youth with old wives fables, to keep their wild affections in awe : such toys may work upon their timorous apprehensions, when wholesome precepts fail, and find no audience in their youthful ears. Tell not me of Hell, Devils, and damned souls, to enforce me from those pleasures which they nick-name sin. What tell ye me of law ? my soul is sensible of Evangelical precepts without the needless and uncorrected thunder of the killing letter, or the terrible periphrase of some roaring Boanerges, the tediousness of whose language still determines in damnation ; wherein I apprehend God far more merciful than His ministers. 'Tis true, I have not led my life according to the Pharisaical square of their opinions, neither have I found judgments according to their prophecies ; whereby I must conclude that God is wonderfully merciful, or they wonderfully mistaken. How often have they thundered torment against my voluptuous life ! and yet I feel no pain. How bitterly have they threatened shame against the vaunts of my vain-glory ! yet find I honour. How fiercely have they preached destruction against my cruelty ! and yet I live. What plagues against my swearing ! yet not infected. What diseases against my drunkenness ! and yet sound. What

danger against procrastination ! yet how often hath God been found upon the death-bed ! What damnation to hypocrites ! yet who more safe ? What stripes to the Ignorant ! yet who more scot-free ? What poverty to the slothful ! yet themselves prosper. What falls to the proud ! yet stand they surest. What curses to the covetous ! yet who richer ? What judgments to the lascivious ! yet who more pleasure ? What vengeance to the profane, the censorious, the revengeful ! yet none live more unscourged. Who deeper branded than the Liar ? yet who more favored ? Who more threatened than the presumptuous ? yet who less punished ? Thus we are fooled and kept in awe with the strict fancies of those Pulpit-men, whose opinions have no ground but what they gain from popularity : Thus are we frightened from the liberty of Nature by the politic Chimeras of Religion ; whereby we are necessitated to the observing of those Laws, whereof we find a greater necessity of breaking.

His Anthems.

But stay, my soul, there is a voice that darts into my troubled thoughts, which saith,

DEUTERONOMY XXVIII. 45.

Because thou hast not kept my Laws, all the curses in this book shall overtake thee, till thou be destroyed.

This Proofs.**DEUTERONOMY XXIX. 27.**

AND the anger of the Lord was kindled against the land, to bring upon it all the curses that are written in this book

2 CHRONICLES XXXIV. 24.

Thus saith the Lord, Behold I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, even all the curses that are written in the book.

DEUTERONOMY XXVIII. 15.

But if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and do all His commandments and His Statutes which I have commanded thee this day, all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee.

Bernard.

It is certain thou must die, and uncertain when, how, or where : seeing death is always at thy heels, thou must, (if thou be wise) always be ready to die.

Idem.

To commit a sin, is a human frailty : to persist in it, is a devilish obstinacy.

Idem.

There are some who hope in the Lord, but yet in vain ; because they only smooth and flatter themselves that God is merciful, but repent not of their sin : such confidence is vain and foolish, and leads to destruction.

This Soliloquie.

PRESUMPTION is a sin, whereby we depend upon God's mercies without any warrant from God's word. It is as great a sin, O my soul, to hope for God's mercy without repentance, as to distrust God's mercy upon repentance. In the first thou wrongest His justice; in the last, His Mercy. O my presumptuous soul, let not thy prosperity in sinning encourage thee to sin; lest climbing without warrant into His mercy, thou fall without mercy into His judgment. Be not deceived, a long peace makes a bloody war, and the abuse of continued mercies makes a sharp judgment. Patience when slighted turns to fury, but ill requited, starts to vengeance. Think not that thy unpunished sin is hidden from the eye of Heaven, or that God's judgments will delay for ever. The stalled Ox that wallows in his plenty, and waxes wanton with ease, is not far from slaughter. The Ephah, O my desperate soul, is long a filling, but once being full, the leaden cover must go on, and then it hurries on the wings of the wind. Advise thee then, and whilst the lamp of thy prosperity lasts, provide thee for the evil day, which being come, Repentance will be out of date, and all thy prayers will find no ear.

Tertull.

A Christian hath no morrow, that is, should put off no duty, until the morrow.

His Prayer.

GRACIOUS GOD, whose mercy is unsearchable, and whose goodness is unspeakable, I the unthankful object of thy continued favors, and therefore the miserable subject of Thy continual wrath, humbly present my self-made misery before Thy sacred Majesty. Lord, when I look upon the horridness of my sin, shame strikes me dumb ; but when I turn mine eye upon the infiniteness of thy mercy, I am emboldened to pour forth my soul before Thee : as in the one finding matter for confusion, so in the other, arguments for compassion. Lord, I have sinned grievously, but my Saviour hath satisfied abundantly ; I have trespassed continually, but He hath suffered once for all. Thou hast numbered my transgressions by the hairs of my head, but His mercies are innumerable like the stars of the sky. My sins in greatness are like the mountains of the Earth, but His mercy is greater than the Heavens. O ! if His mercy were not greater than my sins, my sins were unpardonable : for His, therefore, and Thy mercies sake cover my sins, and pardon my transgressions. Make my head a fountain of tears, and accept my contrition, O Thou Well-spring of all mercy. Strengthen my resolution, that for the time to come I may detest all sin. Increase a holy anger in me, that I may revenge myself upon myself, for displeasing so gracious a Father. Fill my heart with a fear of Thy judgments, and

sweeten my thoughts with the meditation of Thy mercies. Go forwards, O my God, and perfect Thy own work in me, and take the glory of Thy own free goodness: furnish my mouth with the praises of Thy name, and replenish my tongue with continual thanksgiving. Thou hast promised pardon to those that repent: behold, I repent: Lord, quicken my repentance. Thou mightest have made me a terrible example of Thy justice, and struck me into Hell in the height of my presumption; but Thou hast made me capable of Thy mercies, and an object of Thy commiseration: for Thou art a gracious God, long-suffering, and slow to anger; Thy name is Wonderful, and Thy mercies incomprehensible. Thou only art worthy to be praised. Let all the people praise Thee, O God, O let all the people praise Thee. Let Angels and Archangels praise Thee; Let the Congregations of Saints praise Thee; Let Thy works praise Thee; Let every thing that breathes praise Thee for ever and for ever. *Amen.*

PSALM L. 21.

*These things hast thou done and I kept silence.
Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one
as thyself: but I will reprove thee; and set them
in order before thine eyes.*

Judgment and Mercy for Afflicted Souls.

PART II.

The Weary Man's Burthen.

GD, who in Himself is the fulness and perfection of all Glory, who needed no tongue to praise it, no pen to express it, no work to magnify it, created a World for his own pleasure, furnished it of his own goodness, made Man out of his own mere motion, appointed him his Lieutenant here upon earth, and as a witness and an instrument of His Glory, the sole end of his Creation: But Man grew proud, transgressed against his first Commandment and fell, and by his fall destroyed his then unborn posterity. Sin entered the world, and death by sin: and I, poor miserable creature, born in sin, have turned His glory to dishonour, my due obedience to rebellion, and my happiness into eternal death. How intolerable is the burden of this sin! How insufferable is the weight of my offences? If I but think of Heaven, it clogs my contemplations. If I but pray to Heaven, it presses down my devotion. I have lost the favor of my God;

I have frustrated the end of my creation; I have broke the peace of my conscience; I have clipt the wings of my faith; I have dashed the comfort of my hopes. Good angels have forsaken me; my conscience hath accused me; God's prophets have condemned me; and Hell gapes for me. What shall I do? or whither shall I fly? Shall I seek to Angels? Alas I have turned them away displeased: They will not hear me, or if they would, they cannot help me. Shall I fly to my own conscience? alas, that will fly on me. Shall I trust on my own merits? alas, they are false lights, and will light me to my own ruin. Or shall I take the wings of the Morning, and fly to the utmost parts of the Earth? alas, my sins will follow me, my sins will haunt me wheresoever I go. Poor miserable man that I am, who shall deliver me from this burthen? Poor miserable man that I am, who shall release me from this bondage? Is there no comfort for a poor distressed soul? Is there no ease for a poor disconsolate Sinner? Is there no balsam for a wounded heart? No refuge for a guilty Penitent?

His Rest.

O my soul, why art thou so sad? and why is thy spirit so disquieted within thee? Put thy trust in God, who hath said,

MATTHEW XI. 28.

Come unto me all ye that are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

His Proofs.

JEREMIAH VI. 16.

THUS saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.

ISAIAH LI. 11.

The redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Sion, and everlasting joy shall be upon their head : They shall obtain gladness and joy ; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away.

MATTHEW II. 29.

Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me ; for I am meek and lowly in heart : and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

Hieron. in Epist.

Dost thou fear poverty ? Christ calls the poor man blessed. Art thou afraid of labour ? pains are the parents of a crown. Art thou hungry ? faith fears no famine. God, the Generalissimo of the world, with his militia of Angels beholds thy combat, and prepares for thy laborious victory a crown of everlasting rest.

Aug. de Virgin.

Sow thy heart with divers seeds, with Fasting, Prayer, Reading, Alms, that the end of thy labour may be the harvest of thy rest.

This Soliloquy.

TRUE, my soul, if thou shouldst only cast an eye upon the letter of the Law, that letter would soon cast thee and condemn thee : or if thy only object were the base corruptions of thy sinful heart, there were sufficient cause to justify that condemnation ; or hadst thou nothing else to trust to but thine own abilities, thy case were too too miserable for expression ; or shouldst thou seriously consider that glorious Majesty thou hast offended, there were no hopes for consolation : but, O my soul, there is a Gospel to mitigate the rigour of that Letter ; there is a Chancery to moderate the severity of that Law ; there is a Saviour to moderate betwixt that God and thy offences. Art thou in bondage ? O my soul, here is freedom ; Art thou dejected ? here is comfort ; Art thou pursued ? here is a refuge ; Art thou over-burthened ? here is rest ; Art thou condemned ? here is a pardon. Appeal therefore from the Throne of Justice to the Seat of Mercy ; from the justice of Jehovah to the mercy of thy Jesus : deny thyself, and he will own thee ; empty thyself and he will fill thee : let not thy sins affright thee, He hath satisfied : let not hell dismay thee, He hath suffered : let not the first death trouble thee, He hath sweetened it : let not the second death terrify thee, He hath conquered it. Fear not to come to him, for He hath called thee. Fear not to pray to him, for He will hear thee.

His Prayer.

O GOD, whose perfect glory needed not the help of man, yet madest him for thy glory, wherein consisted his eternal happiness ; I, a poor son of Adam, fallen by his sin, and wallowing in my own corruptions, lie prostrate here before the foot-stool of Thy Mercy-seat, acknowledging my grievous sins, and humbly begging pardon for my manifold transgressions. How infinite is Thy mercy, O God, that hast not spared Thy only Son, but made his precious blood a ransome to redeem me from the jaws of Death ! I have made myself a great delinquent, and Thou hast appointed Him my gracious Advocate : I have made myself a Sinner, and He hath given Himself to be my Saviour. To Thee therefore, O my blessed Jesus, whose Death is my deliverance, I flee : before Thee (who art more merciful than I am miserable) I fall. Thy mercies have invited me, thy merits have emboldened me, to present my groans before Thy gracious ears, and to lay my burthen upon thy dying shoulders. O Lamb of God which takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon me. O Lamb of God that takest away the burthen of my sins, have mercy upon me, and grant me thy rest. O Thou that tookest my flesh upon Thee, grant me Thy Spirit. Sanctify my thoughts : be merciful to my sins ; be gracious unto my prayers. Let the intercession of Thy merits restore me to the favour of my God. Let the freeness of Thy mercy release me from the burthen of my con-

science. Wean me from myself: direct me in Thy ways. Be Thou my rest: be Thou my refuge. Fix Thou my wavering faith: recall my wandering hopes. Give Thy angels charge over me, whom I have so often sent grieved away. Establish me with a free spirit, and restore me to the joy of Thy Salvation. Let that power that calls me, enable me to come, and let my coming be rewarded in Thy promise. Let Thy Word comfort me, let Thy truth conduct me, and let Thy Spirit counsel me; that being relieved by the bounty of Thy grace, released from the burthen of my sins, and redeemed by the virtue of Thy blood, I may come to Thee with the confidence of a Son, and be received of Thee in the compassion of a Father, and after this life of Grace, live with Thee in Thy kingdom of Glory.

HEBREWS II. 18.

*For in that He himself hath suffered, being tempted,
He is able to succour them that are tempted.*

S. Aug.

*Christ is the way, the truth, and the life: the way
wherein thou shouldest go; the truth, whither thou
wouldest arrive; the life, which thou wouldest enjoy.*



The Sinner's Sentence.

Dost the miserable condition of Mankind ! What loads of self-made misery are fallen upon the sons of men ! Man that had once a power not to fall, hath not now the will to stand : and being fallen by his ambitious will, hath lost the power to rise. He was created good : but not content with such a goodness, grew covetous to increase it by the knowledge of that which (being known) deprived him of that goodness. Evil he desired to know ; and not knowing the misery of that knowledge, by that knowledge became miserable. That God, the sweetness of whose presence was the perfection of man's felicity, he rebelliously declined ; and, being the favourite of Heaven, made himself a firebrand of Hell : and I, his miserable child, am made more miserable by my own offences. What mercy can I expect from this just God, whose justice I have so oft offended ? What judgment may I now suspect from that merciful God whose mercy I have so oft abused ? Is not the practice of my life, Sin ? Are not the wages of my sin, Death ? If one sin destroyed a world of men, shall not a world of sins destroy one man ? I that have not feared to provoke His justice, am now afraid to think Him just. I that have slighted His mercy, have now no warrant to hope Him merciful. He that made the eye, can he choose but see ? He that sees all things, beholds He not my sin ? Can He behold my ~~sin~~.

and not punish ? Can He punish, and I not be confounded ? What am I, poor dust and ashes, to stand before so great an enemy ? Did He not create me for His service, and shall not His hand destroy me for my rebellion ? What advocate shall plead my cause ? What sanctuary shall secure me ? Shall that Blood save me which I have spilt ? Will that Judge quit me whom I have crucified ? Shall I present my prayers to Heaven ? Alas ! my very prayers will return like thunderbolts upon my head. Shall I lay my sins before the eye of Heaven ? Ah me ! I dare not, lest they draw down vengeance into my bosom.

His Sanctuary.

Be not afraid, my soul, God's mercy far transcends thy misery. Cheer up ; where sin abounds, there grace abounds much more. O now, my soul, depart in peace, for thine eyes shall see thy salvation. Open thine ears and hear what the Spirit saith,

JOHN XI. 26.

He that believeth in me shall never die.

His Proofs.

ROMANS I. 17.

THE just shall live by faith.

JOHN III. 16.

God so loved the world, that He gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life

ACTS XVI. 31.

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

JOHN V. 24.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life.

Chrysost.*The faith of the true Catholic Religion is the light of the soul, and the gate of life, and the foundation of eternal happiness.***Cassiod.***Man enjoys all things in himself that enjoys himself; but he only enjoys himself that enjoys his God; and he alone enjoys his God that believes in Him.***August.***No greater treasure than the true Catholic faith. It gives to the blind light, to the sick health, to sinners Repentance, to the penitent, Salvation.*

His Soliloquie.

BUT is thy misery, O my soul, greater than His mercy? 'Tis true, the practice of thy life is sin; but the practice of His Mercy is pardon: the wages of thy sin is death; but the merits of His death is life. Art thou afraid to think the God of Vengeance just? and well thou mayest, if thou deny the God of Mercy to be merciful. Old Adam hath run thee in debt, and young Adam hath paid the score, and wilt thou not acknowledge it? O my distrustful soul, darken not the sun-shine of His power with the clouds of thy infidelity; eclipse not the illustrious body of His mercy with the interposition of thy despair. Think not thy great Creator is thine enemy, when thy gracious Redeemer is thy friend. Hast thou sinned against thy Creation? thou art absolved by thy Redemption. Art thou penitent for thy rebellion? thy peace is made by thy Redeemer. But thou hast shed thy Saviour's blood: take comfort, that very blood which thou hast spilt, will save thee. But thou hast crucified the Lord of glory: the Lord of glory, whom thou hast crucified, hath crucified thy sins. Fear not, then, my soul, to fly to such a Friend, whose arms are open to embrace thee, whose eyes are open to behold thee, whose lips are open to plead for thee, whose wounds are open to ease thy pains, whose ears are open to hear thy prayers.

His Prayer.

O GOD, that madest all things to serve man, that man might the more cheerfully serve Thee, that gavest him power to continue in that perfect state thou madest him in, and a will to use that power to Thy glory and his own comfort ; I, the unhappy son of my unhappy parents, made more unhappy by mine own transgressions, do here in all humility and contrition acknowledge myself the miserable subject of thy utter wrath. Lord, I have lost the power to do what thou commandest, and am only left to suffer what thy displeasure shall lay upon me. But yet, O God, thy mercy is no less infinite than thy justice, and far more infinite than my sins, and Thou hast promised life to all believers. Give therefore dust and ashes leave, O Lord, to claim this gracious promise ; and what Thou hast commanded to be done, O give me power to do. Enter not into judgment with Thy Servant, O Lord, for in Thy sight shall no flesh be justified. Look not upon Thy Servant, O God, but through the blood of thy Son ; and let the merits of a Saviour out-cry the demerits of a Sinner. Remember not what I a Sinner have done, but call to Thy remembrance what He my Saviour hath suffered. O let his bloody sweat anoint my bleeding wounds, and accept His death as the full wages of my offences. Lord, I am sick, I fly to Him as my Physician ; I am a trespasser, I fly to Him my Advocate ; I am a suiter, I fly to Him my Mediator ; I am a delinquent, I fly to Him my Sanctuary ; I

am a sinner, I fly to Him my Saviour. Let the shamefulness of His death expiate the sinfulness of my life ; and let the willingness of His obedience satisfy for the wilfulness of my rebellion. Let my sins, that cry louder than the sins of Cain, be washed in His blood, which speaks better things than the blood of Abel. Remember Thy promises to those that believe. Lord, I believe ; Lord, help my unbelief. Quicken my soul with faith, inflame my affections with love, and fill my mouth with prayers ; that knowing Him, I may believe in Him ; and believing in Him, I may love Him ; and loving Him, I may praise Him with Hosannah's here in the Church militant, and Hallelujah's hereafter in the Church triumphant.

Boeth.

There lies on us a great necessity of doing well, since we do all things under the eyes of that Judge that sees all.



The Poor Man's Want.

God that created all things for man's use, created man for His service, who, by the accommodation of all the creatures, might be enabled the better to do service to his Creator. But when the proud disloyalty of man rebelled, the creature, that knew not how to serve man on such conditions, returned to his first Creator, to be a-new disposed of by Him according to His pleasure. How dare I then presume to expect from His hands what I have disinherited myself of by my rebellion? Or how can I a dog claim any interest in the children's bread? How dare I a sinner intrude into the portion of the righteous? And if the righteous only shall inherit the land, in what quarter lies mine inheritance? If blessings be the proper dues of sons, what is due to me the greatest of all sinners? I am no son, and therefore no heir; insomuch that what I possess I enjoy not by right, but by usurpation. What have I that I can call mine own? Or wherein can my title prove a right? I am wretched, for I am a sinner; I am poor, for I want the things I have; I am blind, for I cannot see my wants; I am naked, for I cannot hide my shame. I can challenge nothing but my sin, my sorrow, my punishment, my shame. I can see nothing but that I am wretched, and poor, and blind, and naked. I can expect nothing but what I first must receive. I can receive no-

thing but what must first be given. Nothing can be given but by prayer. Prayer hath no virtue but by faith ; and whatsoever is not of faith is sin. How then shall I supply this emptiness ? By what means shall I relieve my wants ? By what art shall I clear this blindness ? What clothes shall hide my nakedness ? If I pray for what I want, I fear I shall not want what I deserve. I am a Prodigal, and have spent my talent ; I have divorced my presence from my angry Father ; I am not worthy to be called His son, and He too worthy to be called my Father ; I have forsaken my God, and His blessings have forsaken me ; I that have banished myself from my Father's bounteous table, am now marshalled among swine.

His Supply.

Return, return thee, O my soul, into thy Father's arms ; confess thy wants, and His mercy will relieve thee, who saith,

JOHN XVI. 23.

Whatsoever ye shall ask my Father in my name He will give it unto you.

His Proofs.

1. JOHN, V. 14. 15.

AND this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us: if we know He heareth us, whatsoever we ask, we know we have the petitions we desire of Him.

JOHN XIV. 13. 14.

Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.

MATTHEW, VII. 7.

Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

PSALM XXI. 4.

He asked life of Thee, and Thou gavest it him, even length of days for ever and ever.

Isidor.

He that obeys not the Law of God, obtains not the thing he desires of God; but if we faithfully perform what he commands, we shall doubtless receive what we desire.

Ambr.

We have all things in Christ, and Christ is all things in us. If we are sick, He is a Physician; if we fear death, He is life; if in darkness, He is light; if in want, He is abundance; if hungry, He is food; if thirsty, He is drink; if miserable, He is mercy; if covetous of Heaven, He is the way.

This Soliloquy.

IF thy own righteousness only interest thee in Heaven, or hadst thou no better title to the blessing of earth than from thyself, how vain were the merits of a Saviour, and how poor were the state of a Sinner? But having no righteousness but in Him, thou hast no interest in any blessing but by Him. Art thou poor in estate, O my soul? find Him, and thou art rich. Art thou wretched? seek Him, and thou hast happiness. Blinded with error? seek Him, and thou art enlightened with truth. Naked? find Him, and thou shalt be clothed with robes. Challenge nothing but thy sin, and thou shalt enjoy all things by thy repentance. Be sensible of thy misery, and thou art capable of His mercy. Hast thou wasted thy portion with the Prodigal? return to thy Father, like the Prodigal. Acknowledge thy own unworthiness, and thy Father's indulgence will embrace thee. Let not the sins of thy own wretchedness discourage thee, nor the fear of His displeasure dishearten thee. Can an earthly mother forget her child? and canst thou distrust the mercies of a heavenly Father? Go then, my soul, fly into His bosom by contrition, groan thy sorrows in His ear by penitent confession. He that hath called thee, will accept thee: He that hath commanded thee to pray, will hear thy prayer.

This Prayer.

O GOD, that art the Creator and Giver of all good things, by which we are either made the more serviceable to Thee, or the more inexcusable in neglecting Thy service ; I, a poor offcast among the sons of Adam, who, like the Prodigal, have misspent Thy precious blessing, do here return from husks and harlots, and the lewd concupiscence of my affections, to Thee, my gracious God, to Thee, O my offended Father. I have usurped Thy favours, intruded into Thy blessings, and like a dog, devoured the children's bread. O God, my wants are great ; nay, what I have, I want, in wanting Thee, that art all goodness, All in All. But yet Thy gracious promise hath invited me to call on Thee in my necessities. Be it therefore, O God, according to Thy Word. Thy Word is Truth ; Thy Truth is everlasting. Lord, as Thou hast made me sensible of my wants, so make me capable of Thy relief. Remove my wretchedness by Thy mercy ; relieve my poverty by Thy all-sufficient Grace ; recover my blindness by Thy light ; cover my nakedness with Thy robe. Be Thou my portion, O God, and let Thy laws be mine inheritance. Hear the needy when he calls upon Thee, and help the poor that hath no helper. Thou art my hope, O God, Thou art my trust, even from my mother's womb. Make me sufficient for Thy grace, and Thy grace shall be sufficient for me. Provoke in my soul a thirst after righteousness, that I may take and drink the cup of Thy salvation.

Teach me to ask according to Thy pleasure, and grant my requests according to Thy promise. Strengthen my faith in all my supplications, and give me patience to expect Thy leisure. What I possess, O God, let me enjoy in Thee, and Thee in it. Relieve my necessities according to Thy will, and let Thy pleasure limit my desires. In my prosperity let me not forget Thee, and in my adversity let me not forsake Thee. With Jacob's wealth, Lord, give me Jacob's blessing ; with Lazarus's want, O give me Lazarus's reward. Both in want and wealth give me a contented mind : both in prosperity and adversity give me a thankful heart. Lord, hear my prayer for Thy mercy's sake, for my misery's sake, for Thy promise sake, for my Jesu's sake, to Whom be glory and praise for ever and ever.

MATTHEW VI. 33.

Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.

S. August.

Thy gold cannot do to thee the office of silver, thy mine cannot be thy bread, nor the light cool thy thirst ; but thy God can be all things to thee.



The Forgetful Man's Complaint.

Man are God's husbandry ; our hearts are the soil ; whereof some is more fruitful, some more barren, and both unprofitable. His holy word is the seed ; which sometimes falls upon a lean ground, sometimes upon a stony, sometimes upon a good ground : the cares of the world are like thorns that spring up and choke it ; persecutions, like a sultry summer, scorch it ; the lusts of the flesh, like the fowls of the air, which wait upon the plough, and licensed by the Prince of the air, devour it. How many disadvantages, O God, attend upon Thy husbandry ? how many losses lessen Thy increase ? how many accidents make Thy soil unfruitful, and Thy harvest easy and unprofitable ? to what purpose do I till my land ? to what advantage do I stir my fallows ? I have no sooner sowed my willing ground, but the seed is stolen away. I bring into the Sanctuary a prepared heart ; I hear glad tidings with a cheerful ear, and then repose them in a joyful breast : but when I look into my hopeful magazine, behold there is nothing there but emptiness and vanity. The joys of what I gained were swallowed with the grief of what I lost. No sooner had I set my portals open to let in the King of glory, but lo, the slightness of my entertainment turned Him out again. I hid my Saviour in the sepulchre of my soul, and they have taken away my Lord, and I know not

where they have laid Him: my Beloved withdrew Himself, and is gone, and I have sought Him, but I could not find Him. O treacherous memory! how hast thou betrayed my rest? how hast thou lost the balsam of thy soul? how art thou heedless in preserving what my poor soul was so earnest in pursuing? how canst thou choose but feel the stroke of death, having thus lost the Word of life? What shall now comfort thee in thy afflictions? O what shall strengthen thee in thy temptations? or what shall wind up the plummets of thy soul in desperation?

His Consolation.

Cheer up, my soul: the pearl which thou hast lost is hidden in thy field, and time shall bring it forth; when sharp afflictions shall plough up the fallows of thy heart, this pearl shall then appear and comfort thee. Turn and read what the Spirit saith.

JOHN XIV. 26.

The Holy Spirit shall bring to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

His Proofs.**JOHN XV. 26.**

WHEN the Comforter shall come, whom I will send from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me.

1. JOHN, II. 27.

The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you ; but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie : and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.

Greg. in Moral.

After what manner works the Holy Spirit in us ? It instructs, It moves, It admonishes ; It instructs the reason, It moves the will, It admonishes the memory.

Bede.

There is no dulness where the Holy Spirit is teacher, no forgetfulness, where the Holy Spirit is Remembrancer.

Greg.

The Holy Spirit is an antidote against seven poisons : It is wisdom against folly, quickness of apprehension against dulness, faithfulness of memory against forgetfulness, fortitude against fear, knowledge against ignorance, piety against profuneness, humility against pride.

His Soliloquie.

THE strongest City (when force without, and treachery within, assail it) must yield ; and canst thou expect, O my soul, to be impregnable ; hast thou the Devil and the World without thee, and so many regiments of lusts within thee, yet thinkest thou to sustain no loss ? art thou so unexperienced in the Christian war, to think thy magazine safe upon so strong a siege ; thou storhest thy heart with plenty of the bread of life, and canst thou hope to keep it from the ravenous hand of thy own corruptions ? Thou sowest thy ground with liberal seed, and thinkest thou that the fowls of the air (being Lucifer's own regiment) will not rob thee of a share ? Thou fillest thy treasury with sums of wealth, and canst thou hope the troops within thee will not plunder thee ? Vex not thyself, my soul ; what is taken from thee with too strong an arm, shall be no loss to thee. Consent not, but continue loyal, and thy compulsions shall never wrong thee. If thy domestic rebels sequester thy whole estate, thy loyalty shall preserve thee. Cheer thee, O then, my soul : the Comforter will come, and then thy faith shall be repaid, thy wrongs shall be repaired ; till then, thy sufferings shall be remembered, and then thy petitions shall be regarded.

His Prayer.

O GOD, without whose special blessing and success Paul plants in vain and Apollos waters to no purpose, that with the influence of Thy Holy Spirit enrichest all those hearts from whom Thy patience shall expect increase; I, the worst piece of all Thy husbandry, do here acknowledge and confess mine own barrenness, as most unworthy of Thy pains. Lord, Thou hast often ploughed my heart with trials and afflictions, manured it with the presence of Thy heavenly grace, and sowed it with Thy pure seed; yet such is the base condition of my unfruitful heart, that either the coldness of the soil starves it, or the cares of the world choke it, or the malice of the devil robs it, that it cannot bring forth increase worthy of Thy pains or expectation. Lord, I am Thy husbandry, continue Thy careful hand upon me, and supply my weakness with Thy strength, and make me fruitful for Thy glory. And Thou, O God, that hast given Thy word for a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my paths, so open mine eyes, that I may behold the frailty of my flesh; so clear my sight, that I may avoid the vanities of the world and the snares of Satan. Be Thou my screen to preserve this lamp: be Thou my lantern to protect this light, that the corruptions of my flesh may not obscure it, that the vanities of the world may not eclipse it, that the suggestions of Satan

may not consume it. Unlock mine ears, that I may hear what Thou commandest. Lock Thou my memory, that I may retain what I hear. Enlarge my heart, that I may practice what I retain: and open Thou my lips, that I may praise Thee in my practice. Consider, O God, how I love Thy precepts, and quicken me according to Thy loving kindness. Hide Thy word in my heart, that my ways may be directed to keep Thy statutes. Remember Thy word to Thy servant upon which Thou hast caused me to hope. Behold I am weak, be Thou my helper: behold I am comfortless, be Thou my Comforter. Restraine his malice that steals Thy word from out Thy ground, that when the time cometh, Thy harvest may be fruitful, and I Thy servant, being found faithful, may enter into my Master's joy, and be received into eternal glory.

S. Hieron.

We are all careful about small matters, and negligent in the greatest; of which this is the reason,—We know not where true felicity is.



The Widower's Distress.

Il vain, so momentary are the pleasures of this world, so transitory is the happiness of mankind, that what with the expectation that goes before it, the cares that go with it, and the griefs that follow it, we are not more unhappy in the wanting it, than miserable in the enjoying it. The greatest of all worldly joys, are but bubbles full of air, that break with the fulness of their own vanity; and but at best like Jonah's gourd, which please us while they last, and vex us in the loss. Past and future happiness are the miseries of the time present; and present happiness is but the passage to approaching misery; which being transitory, and meeting with a transitory possessor, perish in the very using. What was mine yesterday in the blessedness of a full fruition, to day hath nothing left of it but a sad remembrance, it was mine. The more I call to mind the joys I had, the more sensible I am of the misery I have. My sun is set, my glory is darkened, and not one star appears in the firmament of my little world. He from whose loins I came, is taken from me: he to whose bosom I returned, is taken from me. My blessing in the one, my comforts in the other, are taken from me: and what is left to me but a poor third part of myself to bewail the loss of the other two. I that was owned by the tender name of a child, am now known by the off cast

title of an orphan. I that was respected by the honorable title of a wife, am now rejected by the despicable name of a widow. I that flourished like a fruitful vine upon the house top, am now neglected and trodden under foot. He that like a strong wall supported my tender branches is fallen, and has left my clusters to the spoil of ravenous swine. The spring-tides of my plenty are spent, and I am gravelled on the low ebbs of all wants. The sonnets of my mirth are turned to elegies of mourning. My glory is put out, and my honour grovels in the dust. I call to my friends, and they neglect me: I spread forth my hands, and there is none to help me. My beauty is departed from me, and all my joys are swallowed up.

Err Belief.

But stay, my soul, plunge not too far: shall not he take that gave? cannot he that took, restore? the Lord is thy portion, who saith,

PSALM LXVIII. 5.

I will be an husband to the widow, and a Father to the fatherless.

Her Proofs.

EXODUS XXII. 22. 23. 24.

*YE shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child.**If thou afflict them in any wise, and they cry at all unto Me, I will surely hear their cry;**And My wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless.*

MALACHI III. 5.

I will be a swift witness against those that oppress the widow and the fatherless.

JAMES I. 27.

Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction.

August.

God is all things to thee. Art thou hungry? He is bread: Art thou thirsty? He is water: Art thou in darkness? He is light: Art thou naked? He is a Robe of eternity: Art thou a widow? He is thy Husband: Art thou an orphan? He is thy Father.

Idem.

Whatsoever is not God is not desirable. Whatever my God bestows upon me, let Him deprive me of, so as He leave Himself: let Him take away His gift, so He give me the Giver.

Her Soliloquie.

HOW hath the Sun-shine of truth discovered what appeared not by the candle light of Nature ! How many atoms in thy soul hath this light descried, which in thy natural twilight were not visible ! Excessive sadness for so great a loss can want no arguments from flesh and blood, which arguments can want no weight, if weighed in the partial balance of Nature. A husband is thyself divided ; thy children thyself multiplied : for whom, (when snatched away) God allows some grains to thy affections ; but when they exceed the allowance, they will not pass in Heaven's account, but must be coined again. Couldst thou so often offend thy God without a tear ? and cannot he, my soul, displease thee once without so many ? Doth the want of spiritual graces not trouble thee ? and shall a temporal loss so much torment thee ? Is thy husband taken away, and art thou cast down ? Hath thy God promised to be thy husband, and art thou not comforted ? true symptoms of more flesh than spirit. Thy husband was the gift, thy God the giver ; and wilt thou more disprize the giver than the gift ? Be wise, my soul : if thou hast lost a man, thou hast found a God : having therefore wet thy wings in nature's shower, go and dry them in the God of nature's sunshine.

Her Prayer.

O GOD, in the knowledge of whom is the perfection of all joy, at whose right hand pleasures are evermore; that makest the comforts of this life momentary, that we may not over-prize them, and yet hast made them requisite, that we may not undervalue them; I, a late sharer in this worldly happiness, but a sad witness of its vanity, do here address myself to Thee, the only crown of all my joys, in whom there is no variableness, nor shadow of change. Lord, Thou didst give me what my unthankfulness hath taken from me, but Thou hast taken from me what Thy goodness hath promised to supply. Thou hast given and Thou hast taken, blessed be Thy name for ever. Thou then, O God, who art not less able to perform than willing to promise, whose mercy is more ready to bestow than my misery is to beg, strengthen my faith, that I may believe Thy promise; encourage my hopes, that I may expect Thy performance; quicken my affections, that I may love the Promiser. Be Thou all in all to me, that am nothing at all without Thee. Sweeten my misery with the sense of Thy mercy, and lighten my darkness with the Sun of Thy glory. Seal in my heart the assurance of adoption, that I may with boldness call Thee my Father. Sanctify my affections with the Spirit of meekness, that my conversation may testify that I am Thy child. Wean my heart from

worldly sorrow, lest I mourn like them that have no hope. Be Thou my Bridegroom, and let our marriage-chamber be my heart. Own me as Thy bride, and purify me with the odours of Thy Spirit. Prevent me with Thy blessings ; protect me by Thy grace ; preserve me for Thyself ; prepare me for Thy kingdom. Be Thou a Father to bless me ; be Thou a Husband to comfort me. In the midst of my want, be Thou my plenty : in the depth of my mourning, be Thou my mirth. Raise my glory from the dust, and then my dust shall show forth Thy praise. Be Thou a wall to support my vine, and let my branches twine about Thee : let them flourish in the sun-shine of Thy grace, that they may bring forth fruit to the glory of Thy name.

Chrys.

Nothing is more rich then he that undergoes a willing poverty, and bears it with a religious cheerfulness.

S. Basil.

Before we do any thing else, be we careful to consecrate the first-fruits of the day and the very beginnings of our holy thoughts unto the service of God.



The Afflicted Man's Trouble.

Mith way soever I turn mine eyes, I see nothing but spectacles of misery, and emblems of mortality. If I look up, there I behold an angry God, and I am troubled: look downwards, there I see a prepared hell, and I am terrified. Look on my right hand, and there prosperity emboldens me to a secure presumption: look on my left hand, and there adversity enforces me to a sad despair. Look about me, and there I find legions of temptations beleaguering me: look within me, and there I see a guilty conscience accusing me. In all which I perceive nothing but misery, nothing but man; and in that misery, that periphrase of man, "Man that is born of a woman hath but a short time to live, and is full of trouble." Were not man's time short, man were the miserablest of all creatures, and I the miserablest of all men. I am still haunted with three Enemies, the World, the Flesh, and the Devil. The World troubles me with her cares; the Flesh troubles me with infirmities: the Devil troubles me with temptations. If I am rich, I am troubled with fears, to lose; if poor, I am troubled with cares, to get: if single, troubled to seek a wife; if married, troubled to please a wife. If I have children, every child is a new trouble; if childless, I am as much troubled for an heir. If sick, troubled with distempers and drugs; if sound, troubled with lust, or labour: if in my business, troubled with vexation: if

in my devotion, troubled with distraction. "Man that is born of a woman hath but a short time, and is full of trouble." Where shall I turn me to avoid this toil ? What steps shall I tread to escape this trouble ? Shall I incline my heart to mirth ? Mirth is but madness, therefore trouble. Shall I quicken my spirits with plenteous wine ? In much wine is much distraction, therefore trouble. Or shall my wiser heart search out the bounds of knowledge ? In much wisdom is much grief: and who increaseth knowledge increaseth trouble. Whom shall I call to aid ? To whom shall I address my sad complaints ? Call to my kindred, they disclaim me: call to my friends, and they deride me. O that I had the wings of a dove, that I might fly away and be at rest. But, whither wouldst thou fly ?

His Deliverance.

Fly from thyself, my soul, and haste thee to that voice that says,

PSALM L. 15.

Call upon Me in the time of trouble, and I will hear thee.

His Proofs.

PSALM XC1. 15.

*H*E shall call upon Me, and I will answer him : I will be with him in trouble ; I will deliver him, and honour him.

PSALM LIV. 7.

*H*e hath delivered me out of all trouble : and mine eye hath seen his desire upon mine enemies.

2. CORINTHIANS, I. 4.

*H*e comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them that are in any trouble, by the comfort whereby we ourselves are comforted of God.

PSALM LXXXI. 7.

*T*hou calledst to Me in trouble, and I delivered thee ; I answered thee in the secret place of thunder.

Greg. Mag.

*I*t is the work and providence of God's secret counsel, that the days of the Elect should be troubled in their pilgrimage. This present life is the way to our long home : God therefore in His secret wisdom afflicts our travel with continual trouble, lest the delight of our journey might take away the desire of our journey's end.

Bernard.

*T*his life is replenished with so many evils, that death is rather a remedy than a punishment : God hath therefore made it short, that seeing the troubles thereof cannot be removed from us, we may the sooner be removed from them.

His Soliloquie.

BE wise, my soul, and what thou canst not remedy, endure. Doth the World trouble thee ? Cling close to Him that hath overcome the World. Doth the Flesh trouble thee ? Mortify the Flesh in thy members. Doth the Devil trouble thee ? Resist the Devil, and he will flee from thee. Art thou troubled with cares in thy abundance ? Be not too careful for to-morrow. Art thou troubled with wants in thy adversity ? Be contented with the bread of to day. Doth sickness trouble thee ? Make use of it, and submit. Doth strength of constitution trouble thee with concupiscence ? Fast and pray. In thy vocation art thou troubled with vexation ? Let those vexations wean thee from the world. Is thy devotion troubled with distractions ? Let those distractions bring thee closer to thy God. Do losses trouble thee ? Make Godliness thy gain. Do crosses trouble thee ? Make the Cross thy meditation. Thus, whilst thou struggles against the stream of Nature, thou shalt be carried with a gale of Grace ; and when thy strength shall fail thee, a stronger arm shall strengthen thee. He that brings thee on with courage, will fetch thee off with conquest. Do what thou canst, and pray for what thou canst not.

This Prayer.

O GOD, that art the Searcher of all hearts, the Revenger of all iniquity, the Comforter of all true penitents, whose ways are inscrutable, whose judgments are intolerable, whose mercy is incomprehensible ; I Thy afflicted suppliant, sensible of Thy displeasure, bewail the multitude of my offences, and am convinced by my own conscience, and Thy fatherly corrections : which way soever I look I see nothing but sin and death, nothing but misery. But, Lord, so infinite is Thy mercy above my sin, and so little pleasure takest Thou in the destruction of a sinner, that Thou hast commanded me to call upon Thee in my trouble, and hast promised to hear me. In due obedience therefore to Thy sweet command, and in firm confidence of Thy gracious promise, my bended knees, O God, present Thee with a broken heart. Thy sacrifices, O God, are a contrite Spirit ; a broken heart, O Lord, Thou wilt not despise. Lord, I am weak, strengthen me with Thy grace ; mine enemies are strong, weaken them with Thy power ; suppress the cares of the world that so oppress me ; subdue the exorbitances of the flesh that so molest me ; curb the insolencies of the devil that so afflict me ; endue my arm with power, and arm my heart with patience. Make haste, O God, to hear me ; make speed O Lord, to help me. Break not Thy covenant with Thy Servant, O God, nor alter what Thy lips have uttered. Remember

Thy promise to the son of Thy handmaid, for it is my comfort in all my trouble. I call to Thee in the time of my distress ; deliver me, O God, according to Thy Word. Consider, O Lord, I am but dust : O magnify Thy power in my weakness. Remember, O God, that I have been long afflicted ; O magnify Thy mercy in my deliverance : for in death there is no remembrance of Thee, and in the grave what tongue can praise Thee ? My bones are vexed, and my soul is troubled ; but Thou, O Lord, how long ? how long ? Behold my griefs, for they are great : regard my troubles, for they are many. Quicken my soul for Thy Name's sake, and bring me out of all my troubles ; then shall my soul rejoice in Thy salvation, and magnify Thy Name for ever and ever.

S. Paul.

Through much tribulation we must enter into the Kingdom of God.

S. Aug.

No servant of Christ is without affliction. If you expect to be free from persecution, you have not yet so much as begun to be a Christian.



The Deserter Man's Misery.

Man I consider but the goodness of my God in offering His gracious favours to me, and my own vileness in refusing of such gracious offers, I cannot choose but wonder at His mercy, in that I live, and am not snatched away from the possibility of repentance. But ah! what comfort is a life that is branded with the mark of death? And what happiness is this possibility of repentance, which hath no strength to actuate it but thy own? My soul, in what a case art thou? Into what a miserable estate art thou reduced? Thou hast forsaken thy God, and I fear thy God hath forsaken thee. Methinks I want the glory of that Sun that once revived me; methinks I lack the comfort of those beams that once refreshed me: methinks I fear where no fear is, and where I most should fear, I find myself no whit afraid. Those heavenly raptures which heretofore surprised my ravished soul, have now no relish in my drowsy ear: those heart-confounding judgments whose very whispers in former times would split my soul in sunder, now move not if they thunder: those sinful thoughts that pressed my soul like mill-stones, can now be acted and reacted without a sigh: those heavenly Prophets whose presence filled me with delight, now trouble not my patience with their absence. My heart is a

lump of dead flesh, my soul is stricken with a dead palsie, my affections with a lethargy. My zeal is frozen, my faith is bed-rid, my charity is dead, and my greatest grief is that I cannot grieve. The mark of Cain is upon me, and I fear that every beast that meets me will devour me. O my soul, what comfort can remain with thee, when the God of comfort hath forsaken thee? What safety canst thou find, when thou hast lost the God of peace? What should I not forego, that I might re-obtain my God? What pleasure would I not abjure, that I might regain His gracious pleasure?

His Comfort.

Cheer up, my soul; who gives thee a heart to desire, will likewise give thee thy heart's desire. Let not His seeming absence dismay thee: the sense of His absence is the symptom of His presence. Let His word be an antidote for thy despair, which saith,

ISAIAH LIV. 7.

For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee.

His Proofs.

DEUTERONOMY IV. 31.

THE Lord thy God is a merciful God ; He will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the Covenant of thy fathers, which He sware unto them.

2 CORINTHIANS IV. 9.

We are persecuted, but not forsaken.

JOSHUA I. 5.

I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.

NEHEMIAH IX. 31.

For Thy great mercy's sake Thou didst not utterly consume them, nor forsake them ; for Thou art a gracious and merciful God.

Ambr.

Let no man despair ; let none conscious of his old sins make himself incapable of divine grace : for God knows how to change his sentence, if man endeavours to forsake his sin.

Bernard.

Whenever thou feelest the burthen of temptation too heavy upon thee, call Him that is thy helper, invoke thy Keeper, and thy aid in all extremities : and say, Lord, save us, for we perish. This Keeper never sleeps nor slumbers ; though for a time He seems afar off, fear not, He will not leave thee nor forsake thee.

This Soliloquy.

IF thy breath, O my soul, fail thee but a minute, thou diest; if thy health forsake thee awhile, thou languishest; if thy sleep leave thee, thou art distempered: no wonder, if thy God withdraws, that thou art troubled. Deject not, O my soul, nor let thy thoughts despair. Stay thee with His promises, and comfort thee with His mercies. Dost thou mourn for Him? Thou shalt be comforted in Him. Dost thou thirst after Him? Thou shalt be filled with Him. He that suffers not a cup of cold water for His sake to go unrewarded, will not permit a tear for His love to be unregarded. He withdraws to sharpen thy desire: He seems lost to inflame the seeker: He forsakes thee awhile, that He may be thine for ever. Thou wantest Him, because thou desirest Him: thou desirest Him, because thou lovest Him: thou couldest not love Him had He not first loved thee, and whom He loves, He loves to the end. If thy neglect hath sent Him from thee, let thy diligence draw Him to thee: if thou hast lost Him by thy sin, seek Him by true repentance: and if thou find Him by thy prayers, entertain Him with thy thanksgiving.

This Prayer.

O GOD, without the sunshine of Whose gracious eye the creature sits in darkness and the shadow of death, Whose presence is the very life and true delight of those that love Thee, cast down Thy eyes of pity upon a lost sheep of Israel, which hath wandered from Thy fold into the desert of his own lust. What dangers can I choose but meet, that have run myself out of Thy protection ? What sanctuary can secure me, that have left the covert of Thy wings ? What comfort can I expect, O God, that have forsaken Thee the God of comfort and consolation ? Return Thee, O great Shepherd of my soul, and with Thy crook reduce me to Thy fold. Thou art my way, conduct me : Thou art my light, direct me : Thou art my life, quicken me. Disperse these clouds of sins that stand betwixt Thy angry face and my benighted soul. Remove that cursed bar which my rebellion hath set betwixt Thy deafened ear and my confused prayers : and let Thy comfortable beams reflect upon me. Leave me not, O God, unto myself : O Lord, forsake me not too long : for in me dwells nothing but despair, and the terrors of hell have taken hold of me. Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me. Remove this heart of stone, and give me, O good God, a heart of flesh ; that it may be capable of Thy mercies, and

sensible of Thy judgments. Plant in my heart a fear of Thy name, and deliver my soul from carnal security. Order my affections according to Thy will, that I may love what Thou lovest, and hate what Thou hatest. Kindle my zeal with a coal from Thine altar, and increase my faith by the assurance of Thy love. O holy fire, that always burnest and never goest out, kindle me: O sacred light, that always shinest and art never dark, illuminate me. O sweet Jesus, pierce the marrow of my soul with the shafts of Thy love, that it may burn and melt, and languish with the only desire of Thee. Let it always desire Thee, and seek Thee, and find Thee, and sweetly rest in Thee. Be Thou in all my thoughts, in all my words, in all my actions; that both my thoughts, my words, and my actions being sanctified by Thee here, I may be glorified by Thee hereafter.

MATTHEW XXVI. 41.

Watch and pray lest ye enter into temptation.

S. Chrys.

To suffer patiently is a greater gift then to raise the dead.



The Humble Man's Depression.

Hill more than happy are those sons of men that measure no further ground than from the sacred font unto their peaceful grave ! How blessed are those infants which never lived to taste those dear-bought penny-worths of deceitful earth ! Alas ! there is nothing here but bitter pills of pleasure-gilded grief ; here is nothing but substantial sorrows, clothed in the shades of false delight. Look where I list, there is nothing can appear before my eye but sorrow, the lamentable object of my misery : contemplate where I list, here is nothing can present my thoughts but misery, the object of my mourning. My soul is a sparkle of Divine fire, but quenched with lust ; an image of my glorious Creator, but blurred with sin ; a parcel of mortal immortality, reserved for death. My understanding is darkened with error ; my judgment is perverted with partiality ; my will is diverted with sensuality. My memory, like a sieve, retains the bran and lets the flour pass : my affections are queish to good, and feverish to evil ; my faith wavers ; my hope tires ; my charity freezes ; my thoughts are vain, my words are idle, my actions sinful. My body is a tabernacle of grief, an hospital of diseases, a tenement of death, a sepulchre of a sinful soul. O my soul, how canst thou own thyself without dejection,

that canst not view thyself without corruption? How art thou enclosed in walls of dust, tempered with a few tears; a lump of earth, quickened with a span of life? Thy life is short and evil; truly miserable, because evil; only happy, because short. When thou endeavourest good, thy heart faints: when thou strugglest with evil, thy strength fails. For this my soul is humbled, and my spirits are depressed: for this I loath myself, and view my misery with indignation.

This Exaltation.

But cheer up, my soul, and let not thy thoughts be over-pressed. The ball that is thrown against the ground rebounds. Humility is the harbinger of grace. Art thou humbled? fear not: Dost thou fear? despair not: Dost thou despair? persist not. Hark what the God of truth hath said,

LUKE XIV. 11.

He that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

S. Ambros. in. hexaemer. de Virg. lib. 3.

The Lord's Prayer and the Apostle's Creed, which do seal up our hearts unto the service and love of God, are daily to be repeated every morning.

Tis Proofs.

PROVERBS XXIX. 23.

A Man's pride shall bring him low; but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit.

I PETER V. 6.

Humble yourselves under the mighty Hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time.

PROVERBS XV. 33.

Before honour is humility.

JOB XXII. 29.

When men are cast down, then thou shalt say, There is lifting up; and God shall save the humble person.

Cassiod.

By humility the Members of Christ know how to overcome the pride of the Devil. By this the faithful command: by this tyranny is conquered: by this the Martyrs are crowned. Neither can there be any perfection of virtue, where there is a defect of humility.

S. August.

The Kingdom is glorious, the way to it lieth low: Wilt thou desire thy journey's end, and yet refuse the way?

Ambr.

Humility, by not seeking, obtains what it contemns.

This Soliloquie.

ALL virtues, as well theological as moral, are besieged with two vices: humility, the fundamental of all virtues, is not exempted. Some puffed up with their own lowliness, grow proud because humble, being high minded by an antiperistasis; this is spiritual pride. Others, taking too single a view of their own corruptions, and more sensible of the disease than of the remedy, are cast into despondency of mind; and this is called dejection. The first froths up into presumption; the second settles down into a despair. How canst thou, O my soul, in this tempest escape this Scylla, or avoid that Charybdis? Dost thou fear the tossing waves? contract thy sails. Fearest thou the quick-sands? use thy compass. He that stills the waves will assist thee; He that commands the sea will advise thee. Look not only on thy load-stone, for then thou wilt not see thy danger; nor only on thy misery, for then thou wilt not be sensible of thy deliverance. If thy humility puff thee up, thou art not fit for mercy: if dejection knock thee down, mercy is not fit for thee. Look up, O my soul, to God's mercy, so as thou mayest be sensible of thy own misery; and so look down on thine own misery, as thou mayest be capable of God's mercy.

This Prayer.

ETERNAL God, who scatterest the proud in the imagination of their hearts, and givest grace to the humble and contrite spirit, bow down Thy gracious ear to me vile dust and ashes, whose misery thus casts itself before Thy mercy. Lord, I am ashamed of mine own corruptions, and utterly loath mine own condition. I am not an object for mine own eyes without disdain, nor a subject for mine own thoughts without contempt: yet am I bold to prostrate my vile self before Thy glorious eyes, and to present my sinful prayers before Thy gracious ears. Lord, if Thy mercy exceeded not my misery, I could look for no compassion; and if Thy grace transcended not my sin, I could expect nothing but confusion. O Thou that madest me of nothing, renew me that have made myself far less than nothing. Revive those sparkles in my soul which lust hath quenched: cleanse Thine image in me, which my sin hath blurred; enlighten my understanding with Thy truth: rectify my judgment with Thy word: direct my will with Thy Spirit: strengthen my memory to retain good things: order my affections, that I may love Thee above all things. Increase my faith; encourage my hope; quicken my charity; sweeten my thoughts with Thy grace; season my words with Thy Spirit; sanctify my actions with Thy wisdom; subdue the insolence of my rebellious

flesh ; restrain the fury of my unbridled passions ; reform the frailty of my corrupted nature : incline my heart to desire what is good, and bless my endeavours that I may do what I desire. Give me a true knowledge of myself, and make me sensible of mine own infirmities. Let not the sense of those mercies which I enjoy blot out of my remembrance those miseries which I deserve ; that I may be truly thankful for the one, and humbly penitent for the other. In all my afflictions keep me from despair ; in all my deliverances preserve me from ingratitude ; that being timely quickened with the sense of Thy goodness, and truly humbled by the sight of mine own weakness, I may be here exalted by the virtue of Thy grace, and hereafter advanced to the kingdom of Thy glory.

MATTHEW V. 9.

Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of God.

S. Bern.

Wherefore should not man greatly humble himself under a God of so great humility ?



The Sinner's Conflict.

When sin entered into the World, death followed. The Scripture tells me of two deaths, the first and the second, this spiritual, that natural : the first, a separation of the body and soul, and is temporal ; the second, a separation of the body and soul from the favour of God, and is eternal : the first is terrible, the second is intolerable. If the first death so terrified the Lord of life, how terrible will the second be to me the child of death ? If every trivial grief disturbs my thoughts, if every petty sickness distemps my body, if the very thought of death dismay my soul, how horrible will death itself appear ? O when the silver cord shall be dissolved, the golden bowl demolished, the pitcher at the fountain broken, the cistern wheels stopped, how will the whole universe of my afflicted body be perplexed ! Yet were I to endure for every man that hath been, is, and shall be, a death as oft repeated as the Sea shore hath sands, all this were nothing to a minute's torment of the second death. O treacherous and soul-destroying sin, how hast thou thus betrayed me to eternal death by thy false, momentary and deceitful pleasures ? How hast thou bewitched me with flattering smiles, and with thy counterfeit delights thus tickled me to death ? Thou hast not only deprived me of a transitory life, but led me

into the hideous jaws of an everlasting death. Thou hast not only divorced my miserable soul from her beloved body, but separated both soul and body from the favours of my God, and left them to the insufferable torments of Eternity. O my soul, can thy life be less than miserable, which being ended is transported to so infinite a misery? How can thy death be less than terrible, which opens the gates to such eternal torments? What wilt thou do? Or whither wilt thou fly? Thy actions cannot save thee, nor thy flight secure thee. Death is thy enemy, who taking the advantage of thy lusts, hath strengthened itself through thy weakness.

His Conquest.

Repair to thy colours, O my soul, the Lord of life is thy General: He hath foiled thy enemy and disarmed him. Stand fast. He is conquered, if thou strive to conquer. Hark what thy General saith,

REVELATIONS II. 11.

He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.

S. Chrys. de orando Deum.

I cannot but admire and wonder at the great love of God towards man, for vouchsafing him so high an honour, as familiarity to speak unto him by prayer.

His Proofs.**REVELATIONS II. 7.**

To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the Tree of Life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.

REVELATIONS III. 21.

To him that overcometh I will grant to sit with me in my Throne; even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His Throne.

REVELATIONS II. 17.

To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden Manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.

Greg. lib. 8. Moral.

The valour of a just man is to conquer the flesh, to contradict his own will, to quench the delights of this present life, to endure and love the miseries of this World for the reward of a better, to contemn the flatteries of prosperity, and inwardly to overcome the fears of adversity.

Hieron. in Epist.

No labour is hard, no time is long, wherein the glory of eternity is the mark we level at.

Savonar.

If there be no enemy, no fight; if no fight, no victory: if no victory, no crown.

This Soliloquy.

OUR life is a warfare, and every Christian is two soldiers. The Army consists of good and evil motions ; these under the conduct of the flesh, those under the command of the Spirit. The two Generals, God and the Devil : the field, the Heart : the Word, on the one side, glory ; on the other side, pleasure : the reward of both, Eternity ; on that side, of happiness, on this side, of torment. How is thy heart, O my soul, like Rebecca's womb ! How do two nations strive within thee ! Cheer up, take courage in the reward that is set before thee. So fight, that thou mayest conquer ; so run, that thou mayest obtain. Let not the policy of the enemy dismay thee, nor thine own feyness disanimate thee. Advance therefore, O my dull soul ; fear not the fiery darts of Satan, nor be afraid of his arrow that flies by night. Press towards the great reward, and let Thy Spirit resist to blood. Take courage from thy cause : thou fightest for thy Prince, thy God, and takest up arms against his enemy, and thy rebellious lusts. Is thy enemy too potent ? fear not. Art thou besieged ? faint not. Art thou routed ? fly not. Call aid, and thou shalt be strengthened : petition, and thou shalt be relieved. Pray, and thou shalt be recruited.

This Prayer.

O GOD to whom belong the issues of death, at whose terrible Name the very foundation of my soul trembles, I, a poor convicted Sinner, accused by my own conscience, and ready to be condemned by Thy justice, do here, in the very wounding of my heart, confess myself a miserable creature. I have nothing to plead, O God, but mercy ; and where shall I find that mercy but in my merciful Redeemer ? Blessed Redeemer, that hast promised victory to those that strive, and life to those that overcome. teach Thou my hands to war, and my fingers to fight. Give me a loyal heart, that the enticements of the world may not seduce it ; give me a constant spirit, that the pleasures of the flesh may not entice it ; give me a wise forecast, that the subtlety of the devil may not entrap me. Let not the multitude of mine enemies discourage me, nor the greatness of their powers dismay me, nor the weakness of my arm dishearten me. Thou that gavest little Israel victory against great Pharaoh, strengthen me ; Thou that gavest little David the day against great Goliath, succour me ; Thou that gavest single Sampson conquest against the numerous Philistines, save me. Lord, fight against them that fight against my soul. Arise, O God, and let thine enemies be confounded. Lord, shield me from the fury of my own corruptions, for they are many ; deliver me from the imaginations

of my own heart, for they are evil, and that continually. Let not the frailty of my youth beset me, and keep me from the danger of my secret sins. Double my watchfulness upon my Dalilah, that is so apt to kiss me and betray me. Without Thy grace I have no will to strive, no power to stand, no hope to conquer. Sustain me, that I may not faint; second me, that I may not fly; strengthen me, that I may not yield. Gird my loins with truth, and let my breast plate be Thy Righteousness; that putting on the helmet of Salvation, I may fight a good fight, and receive a crown of glory; that having passed the terrors of the first death, I may escape the torments of the second, and triumph with Thee in the Kingdom of glory.

S. Cyprian.

*For why were we listed into the bands of His militia,
if we look for nothing but peace, and do shun and
refuse the difficulties of His service.*

Anonym.

*If we do but resist, we have overcome; and cannot be
conquered but by our own treachery.*



Sion's Decay.

Dost ask me, Why so sad? or can my sorrow be thy wonder? Canst thou, or canst thy eye expect a sun-shine where the greater lamp of Heaven is eclipsed? or can my soul be frolick when the vine-yard of my heart is blasted? Can the children of the bride-chamber choose but hang their heads, to see the Bride-groom slighted, and the Bride's lovely cheeks profaned with every peasant hand? Can poor affrighted Lambs, wanton and frisk upon the pleasant plains, whenas their worried mothers tremble at the quest of every cur? What member can rejoice, when as the body is dis-membered? Sion, the glory of Heaven, is darkened, and her bright beams obscured. Sion, the vine-yard of our souls, is blasted, and her clusters are grown sour. Sion, the Bride of my Redeemer, is defiled, her blood-washed robes are sullied and slubbered. Sion, the Mistress of our flocks, is over-powered, and her tender lambs have no protection. Sion, the Mother of us all, is barren, and her uberous breasts are dry. Sion, the glorious Corporation of the Elect, is factious in itself, and her Members are disjointed. Ah! how can my distressed soul find rest, when Sion the rest of my distressed soul is oppressed? How many of her dearest children are now tugging at the slavish oar of infidels! How many roaring under the imperious hand of the daughter of Babylon!

How many banished from their native soils, and driven from their usurped possessions ! This Vine, which Heaven's right hand hath planted, is decayed, her fences broken, her hedge trodden down, her body torn by Schismatics, cankered with Hereticks, blasted with fiery spirits ; her branches rent with the wild boar, her grapes devoured by the wily fox. Her shepherds are turned wolves, and have devoured her flocks. Confusion is within her walls, and desolation is near unto her gates. O Jerusalem, if I forget to mourn for thee, let my right hand forget her cunning ; and if I prize not thee above my greatest joy, let my tongue cleave to my roof.

Her Defence.

But hark, I hear a heavenly voice whispering glad tidings in my ear, which saith,

ISAIAH XXVII. 3.

I the Lord do keep it, and will water it.

S. Ambrose.

The Catholic Church is always vested with the garments of Christ, and therefore ever under His protection.

Her Proofs.

PSALM LXIX. 35.

THE Lord will save Sion, and will build the cities of Judah ; that they may dwell there, and have it in possession.

PSALM LXXXVII. 5.

Of Sion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her : and the Highest himself shall establish her.

ISAIAH XIV. 32.

The Lord hath founded Sion, and the poor of His people shall trust in it.

ISAIAH XII. 6.

Cry out and shout thou inhabitant of Sion, for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of Thee.

Orig. Hom. 10. in divers.

O Holy Lord, how happy are they that trust in Thee ! It is a most certain truth, that Thou lovest all those that love Thee, and never forsakes those that trust in Thee. For behold, thy Love sought Thee, and undoubtedly found Thee. She trusted in Thee, and she is not forsaken of Thee, but hath obtained more by Thee, than she expected from Thee.

Bernard.

He will give His Angels charge over Thee. O what reverence, what love, what confidence deserveth so sweet a saying ? For their presence, reverence ; for their good will, love ; for their tuition, confidence.

Her Soliloquie.

WHO is not interested in the miseries of Sion ?
What sadness may not be justified in her calamity ?
O my soul, thou mayest here spend thyself in holy
passion, and dissolve thyself in tears : but yet be wise-
ly sad ; let not thy tears exceed thy confidence, nor
let thy grief exclude thy hope. Mourn not for the
Bride, as if the Bridegroom were not ; or being, had
no power ; or having power, wanted will ; or having
will, were like thyself forgetful. No, no, my soul, he
that suffers her to suffer, will sustain her in her suffer-
ance, and crown her sufferings : when she is persecut-
ed, she prospers ; when she is oppressed, she flour-
ishes ; in her contempt she gains honour ; in her
wounds, victories ; in her reproach, credi ; in her pa-
tience, a crown ; and with her crown of thorns, a crown
of glory. Can she be more like her Bridegroom than
in affliction ? Can she more resemble her Husband
than in persecution ? Remember, O my soul, she is
a plant of His right hand's planting, and who can pluck
it up ? Fear not, this vine must prosper in spite of
opposition. Yet know, my soul, thou shalt not pros-
per, nor see good days, unless thou wish prosperity to
Jerusalem, and pray for peace in Sion.

The Prayer.

O GOD, that art the beauty of Sion, and the glory of thy Jerusalem, and the joy of thine elect, behold the mangled body of thy distressed Church ; relieve the miseries of her distempered members. She is our Lamp, illuminate her with Thy glory ; she is Thy Vine, O fructify her with Thy grace ; she is Thy Bride, embrace her in Thy love ; she is Thy Flock, protect her by Thy power ; she is our Body, rectify her with Thy health ; we are her Members, sanctify us with Thy righteousness. Let not the malice of Satan discourage her : let not the counsels of the wicked disturb her : let not the gates of hell prevail against her. Give verity in her doctrine, unity in herself, uniformity in her discipline, universality in her progress. Repair her broken fences, and weaken the power of the wild boar. Bless all such as love her ; and as for her enemies, either convert them in Thy mercy, or confound them in Thy justice. Let her appear to be Thy Daughter, and let the King's Daughter be all glorious within. Let her be known to be Thy Ark, and let Dagon fall down before her. Purge her from error, heresy, ignorance, and superstition ; and being purged, O take Thou pleasure in her beauty. Behold her branches which suffer for Thy name, and give them deliverance or patience. Let no weapon that is formed against Thy Church prosper, and let all tongues that

speak against her be confounded. Let her gates be always open, and glorify the house of Thy glory. Let Thy hand be upon the man of Thy right hand, that he may guard this plant which Thy right hand hath planted. Give Thy justice to the King, and Thy Righteousness to the King's Son. Season Thy Seminaries with Thy truth, and bless the house of Levi, and bless the house of Aaron. Turn Thy countenance to Thy first love, the Jews ; and take not Thy candlestick from Thy chosen, the Gentiles : that having one Shepherd, we may be one flock ; and having one faith, we may be one Church ; and having one heart to please Thee, we may have one voice to praise Thee, here militant in the Kingdom of Grace, and hereafter triumphant in the Kingdom of Glory.

S. Cyprian.

He cannot have God to be his Father, who owns not the Church as his Mother.

S. Ambros.

Arise therefore, run to the Church : there is the Father, there is the Son, there is the Holy Ghost.



The Mourner's Calamity.

FOR Stoicism to rejoice at funerals and lament at births of men, is more absonant to nature than to reason. Too self-indulgent nature would preserve herself on any terms; but well instructed reason holds a being but an ill penny-worth purchased on condition of so long a misery. Who knows himself a Man, needs seek no further for a cause to mourn: for what is Man but a sample of weakness, the spoil of time, the May-game of Fortune, the image of Inconstancy, the balance of calamity? and what besides, but phlegm and choler? His birth is a painful coming into the world; his life a sinful continuance in the world; his death a dreadful going out of the world. His birth brings him into the shop of sin; his childhood binds him apprentice to sin; his youth makes him free in sin; his full age trades in sin; his old age breaks him; his last sickness arrests him; and death casts him into prison. The pleasure he takes is to displease his God; his business is to disturb his neighbour; his study is to destroy himself: his best labour is but vanity, and the fruit of that labour is vexation of spirit. His mirth is a short madness, his sorrow a long torment, his recreation a formal antick, his devotion an antick formality: his course of life is a quotidianague, whose cold fits are sloth and charity, whose

hot fits are wrath and concupiscence ; his pleasures are but airy shadows to beguile him ; his honours are but frothy pleasures to betray him ; his profit is but golden fetters to beslave him, the effect whereof is sin, the end whereof is death. In brief, he that would learn to be a mourner, let him remember that he is a man. O my soul, is this the pleasure that this world promises ? Is this that happiness that this great promiser affords ? Had man no hopes of greater happiness than earth can give, how more unhappy were he than a beast ! What happiness can counterpoise his sorrow ? What mirth can countervail his misery ? What comfort is there in this house of mourning ? Where then shall I repose my trust ? On whom shall my crushed hopes rely ?

His Consolation.

Darest thou believe the word of Truth ? Hark what the word of Truth hath said,

MATTHEW V. 4.

Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.

This Proofs.

PSALM CXIX. 50.

THIS is my comfort in my affliction, for Thy word hath quickened me.

ISAIAH LXI. 2.

Proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn.

JEREMIAH XXXI. 13.

I will turn their mourning into joy, and will comfort them, and make them rejoice from their sorrow.

PSALM LXXI. 20. 21.

Thou which hast showed me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth. Thou shalt increase my greatness, and comfort me on every side.

Aug. Soliloq. cap. 23.

There was a great dark cloud of calamity before mine eyes, so that I could not see the Sun of Justice, and the light of truth: but, Lord, Thou art my God, who hast led me from darkness and the shadow of death; hast called me into this glorious light, and behold, I see.

Kemp. lib. 3. cap. 50.

There is none under Heaven that can comfort me, but Thou my Lord God, the Heavenly Physician of souls, that strikest and healest, bringest into hell and drawest out again.

This Soliloquie.

MISERY is the badge of mortality, and mortality the lot of man. He that views himself impartially, needs seek no subject for a tear ; yet, O my soul, hadst thou not seen thine own misery, how more miserable hadst thou been ! Hadst thou been hood-winked to thy corruptions, hadst thou been blind to thine infirmities, had thy filth been painted over with vanity, how had the way to thy redress been blocked up ; how hadst thou stumbled at thyself, and fallen at thine own destruction ! O my soul, it is a great part of safety, to see a danger ; a good step towards health, to discover the disease ; a fair progress towards happiness, to behold thine own misery. But evils discovered, and no more, grow sharper by the discovery. He only uses a fore-seen danger, that endeavours to avoid it : he profits by a discovered disease, that labours to amend it : he takes benefit by provided misery, that strives to eschew it. Being fairly warned, my soul be thou as strongly armed. Dost thou plead weakness ? be courageous, and thou shalt be victorious. Does sadness cool thy courage ? be patient, and thou shalt be comforted : remember thou art militant. Dost thou find thyself timorous ? strengthen thyself with resolution. Dost thou find thyself spent ? fortify thyself by prayer.

This Prayer.

O GOD that hearest the sighing of a contrite heart, and bottlest up the tears of a repentant eye, bow down thy gracious ear and hear the torments of a grieved breast. Look on my tears, and read in them what my closed lips are even ashamed to utter. Thou madest me free, but I have lost my freedom by my rebellion. Thou madest me like Thyself, but I have blurred thine image by my sin : Thou madest me clean and holy, but I have wallowed in the mire of my own corruptions : Thou madest me for Thy glory, but I have lived to Thy dishonour : Thou madest me a man, but I have made myself a worm, and no man. Lord, I see the misery of my own condition, and without Thy mercy I am worse than nothing : but Thou art gracious, and of great compassion, and Thy truth endures from generation to generation. Lord, Thou hast promised joy to those that grieve, and comfort to them that mourn. In full assurance of Thy gracious promise, upon my bended knees I humbly sue for Thy seasonable performance. Strengthen me, that I may endure this night's sorrow, and let the joy of Thy good Spirit cheer me in the morning. Let me not grieve like those that go into the pit, nor let my mourning be like theirs that have no hope. Let not the vain comforts of the world please me, nor the dead pleasures of the earth rejoice me. Make me a willing

prisoner to my grief, until Thou please to show Thyself the God of consolation. Sanctify my sorrows to me, and direct my mourning to the right object. Open the flood-gates of mine eyes, that I may weep bitterly for my offences. Dissolve my head into a tide of tears, that Thou mayest wash away the filth of my corruptions. Let nothing stop the current but the assurance of Thy love ; and let my furrowed cheeks be dried in the sun-shine of Thy favour. Accept, O God, of this wet sacrifice of tears, and let my groaning be a peace-offering for my trespasses. Look at Thy right hand, and for His sake that sits there, grant these my petitions, firmly grounded on Thy promise and His merits ; that my sad soul being relieved by Thy mercy may receive endless comfort, and Thy name eternal glory.

S. PAUL.

For these light afflictions which are but for a moment, work for us a more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

S. Greg.

To consider what dolours deserve to be made the punishment of disobedience, will much abate those sorrows that we have for any affliction.



The Serpent's Subtilty.

What miserable dignity belongs unto the honourable name of man ! What sad prerogatives pertain to that unhappy generation of mankind ! Ah ! what is man but a polluted lump of living clay, a little heap of self corrupted earth, created to happiness, born to sorrow ? And what is mankind but a transitory succession of misery, on whom mortality is generally entailed from generation to generation ? Each particular man is the short and sad story of mankind, written by his own dear experience in a more favourable style, wherein every one is naturally inclined to spare himself, and hide his nakedness among the shades, where being lost, he seeks himself unsound, or finds himself unknown, or knows himself most miserable. The Devil appeared not as a lion ; strength could not constrain an upright soul. He appeared not as a dragon ; fear could not compel a dauntless Spirit. But he appeared a Serpent, to insinuate and creep into the bosom of his soft affections. How often is this story acted by me the miserablest of Adam's son's ? Behold how the forbidden tree of vain delights stands laden with her pleasant fruits. See how the Serpent twists and winds, and tempts the weaker vessel of my body, which having yielded, tastes and tempts my better part. Which done, what nakedness,

what shame presents before my guilty eyes ? What slight excuses (patched like leaves together) I frame to hide my nakedness, my shame ? And when the voice of my crying conscience calls me in the cool of my lust, O how I start, and tremble, and seek for covert among the trees ? where being found at last and questioned, my soul accuses the infirmity of my body, my body accuses that Serpentine temptation ; so that all three, being partners in sin, are sad partakers of the punishment. Thus every minute, O my soul, art thou surprised ; thus every moment doth this twisting Serpent tempt and overcome thy frailty ; thus every minute are eternal deaths still multiplied upon Thee. What hopes hast thou in thy collapsed estate to overcome that Serpent which Adam in his perfection did not conquer ?

His Defeat.

Cheer up, my soul, there is a Champion found who shall curb this Serpent's power, and Heaven hath spoken it,

GENESIS III. 15.

The seed of the woman shall break the Serpent's head.

His Proofs.**ROMANS XVI. 20.**

AND the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.

1. JOHN III. 8.

For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.

REVELATIONS XVII. 14.

He shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome him.

EPHESIANS VI. 16.

Above all things take the shield of Faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench the fiery darts of Satan.

Chrysost. super Mat..

He forced him not ; he touched him not ; only said, Cast thyself down : that we may know, whosoever obeyeth the devil, casteth himself down : for the devil may suggest, compel he cannot.

Bern. in Serm.

It is the devil's part to suggest ; ours, not to consent. As oft as we resist him, so oft we overcome him ; so often as we overcome him, so often we bring joy to the Angels, and glory to God, who proposeth us, that we may contend ; and assisteth us, that we may conquer.

His Soliloquie.

MAN, by the power of the transcendent Good, was created good, with a power to continue good. Man through disobedience lost this power, and that arbitrary goodness is turned to necessary evil. The whole mass is corrupted, and lies in the same condition it made itself: but God out of an unsearchable love to his creature, out of His infinite wisdom (not violating His justice) found a way to exercise His mercy; drawing what handfuls He pleased (not for the dignity of the matter) out of this lump, the rest he left to itself. As it had been no injustice in God to leave the whole in the perdition it had cast itself, so it was an inscrutable mercy to draw out some part out of that self-made perdition. This Redemption, O my soul, was a legacy given at the death of thy Redeemer; and thy business is to search the will, and in it thy interest. But where is that will? Search the Scriptures. But how shall it appear by searching? By the fruit thou shalt know the tree. Examine thy heart. Dost thou find there a love to God for His own sake, and a love to thy neighbour for God's sake, and to both for obedience sake? Go thy ways, thou art in the will; and the seed of the woman hath broke the Serpent's head.

This Prayer.

O GOD, thou didst create mankind for the glory of Thy holy name, and redeemest man being lost with the blood of Thy only Son, and hast preserved him by Thy free mercy and continual providence; I, a poor son of miserable Adam, do here acknowledge myself unworthy of the least of all Thy mercies. Lord, what am I, that Thou shouldst look upon me? and what is the son of thy handmaid, that Thou shouldst think upon him? I know the best of all my actions are unclean, and these my very prayers are abomination in Thy sight: my thoughts, my words, nay the whole course of my life is sin, and there is nothing in me which deserves not death. Yet, Lord, even for the altar's sake on which I offer up this sinful sacrifice, loath not the prayers of my polluted lips, or stop Thy ears against my sad complaints. Lord, I am as vile as sin can make me, and deserve what curse Thy wrath can lay upon me. I brought corruption from the womb, and sucked rebellion from the very breast. My life is nothing but a trade of sin, wherein I hourly heap unto myself wrath against the day of wrath: insomuch that wert Thou not more merciful to me than I am or can be to myself, I had been now roaring under Thy justice, that am here begging for Thy mercy. Lord, I am nothing but infirmity, and daily wallow in my own corruptions. The old Serpent continually besieges me,

and the feebleness of my old man cannot resist him. Arise, O God, and crush Thy enemy and mine, whose fury through my confusion aims at Thy dishonour. Let the seed of the woman quicken in my soul, and strengthen my weakness to encounter with temptation. Let it, O let it break the Serpent's head, that I may conquer for the time to come; and give Thou me a broken heart, that I may grieve for the time past: give me water from the spring of life, that it may quench the fiery darts of death. Strengthen the new man in me, and let the power of the old man languish daily: that being confident in Thy promise, I may be sensible of Thy performance; and being freed by Thy power, I may be filled with Thy praise, and glorify Thy name for ever and ever.

S. Greg.

Holy Job was more Satan's torture, than Satan was the others tempter.

S. Ambros.

It is necessary that the perverse sinner, whom the longanimity of the patience of God could not mend, should be tormented with eternal punishment.



The Sinner's Poverty.

Wheretill doth this my natural state excel a beast ? In what one thing ? Am I not worse ? Their outward senses are more perfect ; my inward senses are less pure. Their natural instinct desires good, and chooses it ; but my perverted will sees good, and yet declines it. They eat being satisfied with moderation : perchance I want, or surfeit. They sleep secure from fears and cares, when I am kept awake with both. They cry to Heaven and are fed by Providence ; I, trusting to myself, want through my improvidence. The worthless sparrows are lodged in their downy feathers ; the silly sheep repose in their warm fleeces : but I have nothing to cover my nakedness, nothing to hide my shame. Naked I was born into the world, and have nothing in the world which I may call my own, or if I have, it is lost with the desire of having. I look into my soul, and can find nothing there but the absence of what I had, or the defect of what I want. I pry into my understanding, and there I find nothing but darkness : I search into my will, and there I find nothing but perverseness : I examine my affections, and there I find nothing but disorder : I view my disposition, and there I find nothing but distemper. What I had I have not, and what I want I cannot gain. If I have obtained any thing that is good, I quickly lose it, for want of knowledge how to

prize it. If I find any good which I had lost, I keep it not, for want of wisdom how to use it. When I call my conscience to account, mine own soul is bribed against me ; and when I call my course of life to question, my frailties flatter me. If the sense of misery should force me to my forgotten prayers, I falter, and my distraction denies me utterance : or if my hopeful thoughts permit my formal lips to recommend my griefs to Heaven, my guilt despairs of entrance ; or if a flash of zeal should wing my prayers, and dart them up into the Almighty's ears, my unrepented sins forbid them audience. Heaven's gates are locked against me, and the keys are lost by my neglect. My sighs want strength to shoot the lock, nor can my stronger groans enforce the portals open.

His Relief.

Cheer up, my soul, the keys are in a faithful hand, or is the Keeper far : call Him, and thou shalt hear Him say,

LUKE XI. 9.

Ask, and it shall be given thee ; seek, and thou shalt find ; knock, and it shall be opened to thee.

His Proofs.**MATTHEW VII. 11.**

IF ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things unto them that ask him?

JOHN XI. 22.

But I know that, even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it unto thee.

MATTHEW XXI. 22.

All things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.

JAMES I. 5.

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him.

S. Bern.

It is easier that heaven and earth should pass, than if you seek God, not to find Him; or than if thou ask, not to receive; or if thou knock, not to be opened unto.

Chrys. hom. 5. in epist. ad Rom.

In having nothing, I have all things, because I have Christ: having therefore all things in Him, I seek no other reward, for He is the universal reward.

This \mathfrak{S} ūlilognir.

CANST thou, O my soul, wonder at thy wants, when thou wantest Him that is the only supplier of all wants ? The beast performs his duty, and (made for thy service) serves thee ; and, wanting food, in his own language craves it, and obtains it. The fowls of the air (being pinched with hunger) carol forth their sweet Hosannah's, and are filled, and then return musical Hallelujah's. Canst thou, my soul, expect supplies like them, and use less means than they ? Come, thou art worth many sparrows, (were not five sold for a farthing ?) The blood of Jesus is thy price, and for His sake all things are thine. Shall beasts for their own sakes be supplied, and shalt thou in the Name of Jesus be denied ? Can a mother pity the trickling tears of an unfed infant, and can the God of mercies be obdure to thee ? Art thou commanded to ask, seek, and knock, in vain ? aye ! but my tongue is slow. Was not Moses the man of God so ? When I seek, my lust diverts me, and I am lost. Is not the great Shepherd come to reduce* His lost sheep ? But, alas ! I knock at the wrong door. Fear not when thou knockest with a right heart. He that is every where will be found ; He that made the ear will hear thee.

* i.e. bring back.

His Prayer.

O GOD that art the perfection of all good, and the giver of all good things, that better knowest what to give than I to ask, and withholdest no good thing from him that seeks Thee with an upright heart; I, a poor suiter at the throne of Grace, being truly sensible of mine own defects, and timorously conscious of my evil deserts, do here even cast myself on Thy gracious providence. And since, O Lord, Thou hast commanded me to ask of Thee the things I want, bow down Thine ear, and hear the prayers which a poor sinner, emboldened by Thy promise, presents before Thee; by whose free favour I have received whatsoever I have obtained, and by my own folly lost whatsoever I had received. Give me a clear sight of my own poverty; show me the poverty of my own relief; that so I may forsake the broken reed of my own power, and strengthen my weakness in the comfort of Thy promise. Lord, Thou hast commanded me to ask, but my sins cry louder than my suits: Thou hast commanded me to seek, but mine own guilt leads me the wrong way; Thou hast commanded me to knock, but Satan holds my hands. Lord, let the blood of my blessed Saviour stop the mouth of my crying sins; let His full satisfaction take away my guilt. Bind him in chains that captivates my power. Teach me to ask that hast commanded me to ask; Thou that hast

commanded me to seek, direct me ; and let my knocking be guided by Thy hand. Give me knowledge, that I may ask what I should ; grant me prudence, that I may seek where I should ; give me providence, that I may knock when I should. Let not my faintness in asking, teach Thee to deny : let not my foolishness in seeking, tempt me to desist : let not my unseasonableness in knocking, strike me with despair. Give me a fervent faith, that I may ask with confidence ; a constant hope, that I may seek with courage : an unwearied patience, that I may knock with constancy. Let me ask like the importunate woman, till I obtain Thee : let me seek like Thy blessed Mother, till I find Thee : let me knock like the sinful publican, till Thou open to me ; that having found Thee here by Grace, in the company of Saints, I may live with Thee in glory, with the Society of Angels.

S. Aug.

An evil conscience cannot hope.

Idem.

No praises heal an ill conscience, nor does any railing wound a good one.

Anonym.

How can they want who have Him that hath all things ?



The Faithful Man's Fear.

Do this and live. Some comfort yet remains ; though life be not absolutely granted, yet death is but conditionally threatened. Do this and live. But what is the work that may deserve such wages ? Give perfect obedience to thy God, and perfect love to thy neighbour. But will not the utmost of my power do ? Will not the best of my endeavour serve ? No, He that is perfect made thee perfect, and requires a perfection. Alas ! if life depends upon such terms, what flesh can live ? Thy inability for the work prophesies the impossibility of the reward. My soul, thou art become a legal debtor, and the utmost farthing is expected. Thou canst neither pay the debt, nor hide thee from thy creditor. What wilt thou do ? Wilt thou plead immunity ? Thy own hand will condemn thee. Wilt thou plead payment ? Thy own poverty will implead thee. Wilt thou plead mercy ? Thy own rebellion will dismay thee. My soul, what security wilt thou put in ? or to what Sanctuary wilt thou fly ? O flatter not thyself, and put not the evil day from thee. Thou hast not only not done what thou shouldest, but thou hast done what thou shouldest not. Thou hast sinned against thy creation, by disobeying thy Creator : thou hast sinned against thy redemption, by crucifying thy Redeemer ; thou

hast sinned against thy sanctification, by quenching of the Spirit: thou hast sinned against God's judgments, by thy presumption: thou hast sinned against His mercies by thy despair: thou hast sinned against thy conscience, by thy rebellion: thou hast sinned against Providence, by thy distrust. Every day brings in an inventory of thy sins, and every sin brings in a faggot to thy execution. O my soul, behold the misery of thy estate, and tremble: behold the mercies of thy God, and wonder. Tremble, for he is a God to punish thine iniquities: wonder, for He is become a Man to bear thy iniquities. Tremble, for thou art not able to do His commands: wonder, for He is willing to accept what thou canst do. Will not the frailty of thy flesh permit thee to do? let the faithfulness of thy heart incline thee to desire. Do what thou canst, and believe what thou canst not.

His Crown.

Cheer up, my sad soul, for He that hath considered the frailty of thy hands, hath freely accepted the faithfulness of thy heart; who saith,

REVELATIONS II. 10.

Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the Crown of life.

His Proofs.

MATTHEW XXV. 21.

WELL done, good and faithful servant ; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things : enter into the joy of thy Lord.

GALATIANS III. 9.

So then, they that be of faith, are blessed with faithful Abraham.

2. TIMOTHY IV. 8.

Henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day.

JAMES I. 12.

Blessed is the man that endureth temptation : for when he is tried he shall receive the Crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him.

Bernard.

O only safe fight, which for and with Christ is undertaken ! in which the Christian Soldier neither wounded, nor overthrown, nor trodden underfoot, nor nor slain, can lose the Victory, if he manfully stand to it, and do not betake himself to shameful flight.

Aug. in Senten.

Whatsoever rageth against the Name of Christ is tolerable if it may be overcome ; and if it cannot, it hasteneth the receiving of the glorious reward : for the faithful man, in the end of his temporal evils, passeth into the fruition of His eternal good.

His Soliloquie.

STAND not, O my soul, upon the legs of a sinner, but fly into the arms of thy Saviour; and what thou canst not purchase by thy endeavour, endeavour to believe. Acknowledge thou thy debt, and thy Jesus will justify thy payment. Trust not in thyself, lest thou be deceived by thyself. Dost thou, O my soul, desire faith? Renounce thyself. Wouldest thou preserve thy faith? Condemn thyself. Thy way to faith is from thyself. Is thy soul dark? Faith enlightens it: is the gate of Heaven shut? faith unlocks it: is the way dangerous? faith secures it: is thy heart timorous? faith emboldens it: is death terrible? faith conquers it: is the crown of life difficult? faith obtains it. Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life. Fear not thy weakness, O my soul; it shall not be to thee according to thy works, but faith. If thy good works cannot save thee before faith, thy evil works cannot damn thee after repentance. As He that crowns thy good works, crowns his own gifts; so He that pardons thy evil works, magnifies his own mercy. Cast anchor here, my soul, and if the waves of thy corruptions overwhelm thee, pump them out by true repentance.

His Prayer.

MOST glorious God, in respect of whom the very Angels are impure, before whom the Cherubims do veil their blushing faces; I, the wretched offspring of presumptuous flesh and blood, fall down before the foot-stool of Thy gracious presence, and humbly present Thee with my sinful prayers. If Thou shouldest weigh my actions with Thy righteous balance, or try me with the touch-stone of Thy sacred laws, the vials of Thy wrath would pour upon me, and Thy justice would be magnified in my confusion. But, Lord, Thou delightest not in the death of a sinner, nor takest pleasure in the destruction of Thy creature. Lord, Thy commandments are most just, and my performance is most imperfect; the best of all my words deserve not the least of all Thy mercies; and the purest of all my actions, nay, my very prayers, are sin. I have sinned against my creation, and yet, Lord, Thou hast redeemed me: I have sinned against my redemption, and yet, O God, Thou hast in some measure sanctified me. I have sinned against my sanctification, and yet, O God, Thou hast not forsaken me: I have sinned against the continuance of Thy mercies, yet hast Thou not confounded me. The whole practice of my life is nothing but rebellion, and the imaginations of my heart are evil, and that continually:

wherefore I wholly renounce myself, O God, and utterly disclaim the works of mine own hands. In Thy goodness, O Lord, I build my confidence, and in Thy mercy I seek for refuge. Grant me the power to do what Thou commandest, and then command me what Thou pleasest. Crucify the flesh within me, and deliver my soul from the spirit of bondage. Free me, O Lord, from the oldness of the letter, that I may serve Thee hereafter in the newness of the Spirit. Let the rebellions of old Adam be lost in Thy remembrance, and let the obedience of the new Adam be ever in Thy sight. Purge from my heart the dregs of unbelief, and kindle in my soul the fire of devotion. Quicken my soul with a lively faith. Lord, I believe; Lord, help my unbelief: that so being faithful to the death, according to Thy command, I may receive the crown of life, according to Thy promise.

2. Tim. 1. 12.

I know whom I have believed; and I am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day.

Sen.

The greatest safety is to fear nothing but God. Nothing should startle a wise courage but the close remembrance of an evil life.



The Fearful Man's Conflict.

Full potent are the infirmities of flesh and blood ! How weak is Nature's strength ! How strong her weakness ! How is my easy faith abused by my deceitful sense ! How is my understanding blinded with deluding error ! How is my will perverted with apparent good ! If real good present itself, how par-blind is mine eye to view it ! if viewed, how dull is my understanding to apprehend it ! if apprehended, how heartless is my judgment to allow it ! if allowed, how unwilling is my will to choose it ! if chosen, how fickle are my resolutions to retain it ! No sooner are resolutions fixed upon a course of Grace, but Nature checks at my resolves ; no sooner checked, but straight my will repents her choice, my judgment recalls her sentence, my understanding mistrusts her light : and then my sense calls flesh and blood to counsel, which wants no arguments to break me off. The difficulty of the journey daunts me ; the straightness of the gate dismays me ; the doubt of the reward diverts me : the loss of worldly pleasure here deters me ; the loss of earthly honour there dissuades me : here the strictness of religion damps me, there the world's contempt dishearten's me ; here the fear of my preferment discourages me. Thus is my yielding sense assaulted with my conquering doubts. Thus are my militant hopes

made captive to my prevailing fears: whence if haply ransomed by some good motion, the devil presents me with a bead-roll of my offences, the flesh suggests the necessity of my sin, the world objects the foulness of my shame; where, if I plead the mercy and goodness of my God, the abuse of His mercy weakens my trust, the slightness of His goodness hardens my heart against my hopes. With what an host of enemies art thou besieged, my soul! How, how art thou beleaguered with continual fears! How doth the guilt of thy unworthiness cry down the hopes of all compassion! Thy confidence of mercy is conquered by the consciousness of thy own demerits; and thou art taken prisoner, and bound in the horrid chains of sad despair.

His Prize.

But cheer up, my soul, and turn thy fears to wonder and thanksgiving; trust in Him that saith,

LUKE XII. 32.

Fear not little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom.

His Proofs.

COLOSSIANS I. 13.

HE hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and translated us into the Kingdom of His dear Son.

ACTS XIV. 22.

Exhort them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God.

JAMES II. 5.

Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, that they should be rich in faith, and heirs of the Kingdom which He promised to them that love Him.

LUKE XXII. 29.

I appoint unto you a Kingdom, as my Father appointed unto me.

S. Aug.

Though we labour in a boisterous Sea, yet Thou, Lord, art our Pilot, and steerest our course between Scylla and Charybdis; so that, both dangers escaped, we shall at length arrive at our port secure.

Macar.

Let us suffer with those that suffer, and be crucified with those that are crucified; that we may be glorified with those that are glorified.

Hieron.

Miserable is his felicity who was never thought worthy to wrestle with miseries, by which contention honour is obtained.

This Soliloquy.

HAST thou crucified the Lord of Glory, O my soul, and hast thou so much boldness to expect His Kingdom ? Consult with reason, and review thy merits ; which done, behold that Jesus whom thou crucifiedst even making intercession for thee, and offering thee a crown of glory. Behold the greatness of thy Creator veiled with the goodness of thy Redeemer ; the justice of a first person qualified by the mercy of a second ; the purity of a divine nature uniting itself with the human in one Emanuel ; a perfect man to suffer, a perfect God to pardon ; and both God and man in one person, at the same instant able and willing to give and take a perfect satisfaction for thee. O my soul, a wonder above wonders ! an incomprehensibility above all admiration ! a depth past finding out ! Under this shadow, O my soul, refresh thyself. If thy sins fear the hand of justice, behold thy Sanctuary ; if thy offences tremble before the Judge, behold thy Advocate ; if thy creditor threaten a prison, behold thy bail. Behold the Lamb of God that hath taken thy sins from thee : behold the Blessed of heaven and earth that hath prepared a Kingdom for thee. Be ravished, O my soul : O bless the name of Elohim ; O bless the name of our Emanuel, with praises and eternal Hallelujah's.

His Prayer.

GR^EAT Shepherd of my soul, whose life was not too dear to rescue me the meanest of Thy little flock, cast down Thy gracious eye upon the weakness of my nature, and behold it in the strength of Thy compassion. Open mine eyes, that I may see that object which flesh cannot behold: enlighten my understanding, that I may clearly discern that truth which my ignorance cannot comprehend: rectify my judgment, that I may confidently resolve those doubts which my understanding cannot determine: sanctify my will, that I may wisely choose that good which my deceived heart cannot desire: fortify my resolution, that I may constantly embrace that choice which my inconstancy cannot hold: weaken the strength of my corrupted nature, that I may struggle with my lusts, and strive against the base rebellions of my flesh: strengthen the weakness of my dejected spirit, that I may conquer myself, and still withstand the assaults of mine own corruption: moderate my delight in the things of this world, and keep my desires within the limits of Thy will. Let the point of my thoughts be directed to Thee, and let my hopes rest in the assurance of Thy favour. Let not the fear of worldly loss dismay me, nor let the loss of the world's favor daunt me. Let my joy in Thee exceed all worldly grief, and let the love of Thee expel all carnal fear. Let the

multitudes of my offences be hid in the multitude of Thy compassions ; and let the reproachfulness of that death which Thy Son suffered for my sake, enable me to suffer all reproach for His sake. Let not my sin against Thy mercies remove Thy mercies from my sin ; and let the necessity of my offences be swallowed up in the all-sufficiency of His merits. Let not the foulness of my transgressions lead me to distrust ; nor let the distrust of Thy pardon leave me in despair. Fix in my heart a filial love, that I may love Thee as a Father ; and remove all servile fear from me, that Thou mayest behold me as a son. Be Thou my all in all, and let me fear nothing but to displease Thee ; that being freed from the fear of Thy wrath, I may live in the comfort of Thy promise, die in the fulness of Thy favour, and rise to the inheritance of an everlasting Kingdom.

Cassian.

Human fear breedeth distrust ; but the divine does great advantage to our hope.

S. Greg.

No kind of death is to be feared by him that has lived well.



The Plague-affrighted Man's Danger. -

KILL is the language of death heard in every street, which by continual passing-bells proclaims mortality in every ear ! How many at this instant lie groaning in their sick beds, and marked for death, whilst others that lived yesterday are now laid out for evening burial ! How many that are now strong and healthful, and laying up for many years, are destined for the enlargement of the next week's bill ! How many are now preparing to secure their lives by flight, who whilst they run from the tyranny of their fears, fly into the very bosom of danger ! What air ? what diet ? what antidote can promise safety ? what shield can guard the angry angel's blow ? what rhetorick can persuade the Heaven-commanded messenger to slack the fury of his resolute arm ? It is an arrow that flies by day ; yet who can see it ? It is a terror that strikes by night ; and who can escape it ? It is the pestilence that walketh in darkness ; and who can shun it ? The strength of youth is no privilege against it ; the soundness of a constitution is no exemption from it ; the sovereignty of drugs cannot resist it ; where it lists, it wounds ; and whom it wounds, it kills. It is God's artillery, and like himself respects no persons. The rich man's coffers cannot bribe it : the skilful artist cannot scribe against it : the black

Magician cannot charm it. My soul, into what a calamity art thou plunged ? with what an enemy art thou beleaguered ? what opposition canst thou make ? what auxiliaries canst thou call in ? How many sad copies of thy destruction are daily set before thee ? how continually is thy death acted by others to thee ? What comfort hast thou in that life which every minute threatens ? What pleasure takest thou in that breath which draws and whiffs perpetual fears ? What art thou other but a man condemned, expecting execution ? And how is the bitterness of thy death multiplied by the quality of thy fears ? Were it a sickness whose distraction took not away the means of preparation, it were an easy calamity, were it a sickness whose contagion dissolved not the comfortable bands of sweet society, it were but half a misery. But as it is sudden, solitary, incurable, what so terrible ? what so comfortless ?

His Deliverance.

Sink not beneath thy fears, my soul : thy deliverance is God's royalty, and under His wings is thy salvation ; in the midst of danger no danger shall befall thee.

PSALM XCI. 10.

Neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.

His Proofs.

PSALM XCI. 1., 3., 4., 5., 6., 7.

WHOSO dwelleth in the secret place of the most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. Surely He will deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He will cover thee under His wings, and thou shalt be sure under His feathers : His truth shall be thy shield and thy buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid of the arrow that flieth by day, nor of the plague that destroyeth at noon-day. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right-hand ; but it shall not come near thee.

Gisten. in cap. 2. Cant. Expos.

O happy sickness, where the infirmity is not to death but to life, that God may be glorified by it ! O happy fever, that proceedeth not from a consuming, but a calcining fire ! O happy distemper, wherein the soul relisheth no earthly things, but only favoureth divine nourishment.

Greg. in Pastoral.

O wisdom, with how sweet an art doth thy wine and oil restore health to my healthless soul ! How powerfully merciful, how mercifully powerful art Thou ! powerful for me, merciful to me.

His Soliloquie.

AND can the noise of death, O my soul, so fright thee in the street, and the cause of death not move thee in thy bosom ? Shall passing-bells tolling for dying men afflict thee, and not the judgments of the living God affright thee ? Shall the weekly bills of a silly Parish-clerk more move thee than the sacred oracles of a holy minister ? Shall the plague inflicted upon others more startle thee than many plagues denounced upon thyself ? Be wise, my soul, avoid the cause, and thou shalt prevent the effect ; be afraid of sin, and thou needest not fear the punishment. Fearest thou the infection ? fly from it : but whither ? Under the wings of the Almighty. But thy sins deny protection there : then nail them to thy Saviour's cross. Fearest thou yet ? O my soul, hast thou so long, hast thou long subsisted under thine own protection, and darest thou not venture under His ? Can there be a Sanctuary more secure ? protection more safe ? Fearest thou death under the wings of life ; or danger under the shadow of the Almighty ? But the suddenness of that death denies preparation. His wings continually prepare thee. It banishes all my friends, and in them my comfort. When thou hast God to thy friend, what comfort canst thou want that may be found by prayer.

His Prayer.

LORD, in whose hands are the keys of life and death, in whom I live, move, and have my being, graciously incline thy tender ear, and mercifully hear the supplications of Thy servant, who hath no hope but in Thy goodness, and no comfort but in Thy promises. My heinous sins, O God, have provoked Thy heavy indignation, and I am humbly sensible of Thy sore displeasure. Thy judgments are come abroad amongst us, and the vials of Thy consuming wrath are poured out upon us. The sins of our nation have cried to Thee for vengeance, and Thou hast visited us with great mortality. Thy people are poured out like water, and our land is become a land of mourning. Turn us, O Lord, that we may be turned ; and magnify Thy mercy in our deliverance. Accept the sorrow and contrition of Thy servants ; and say unto Thy Angel, It is enough. Be Thou my refuge, and my fortress, O God ; and give me confidence to repose under the shadow of the Almighty. Cover me, O Lord, with the feathers of Thy wings ; and let Thy truth be my buckler and my shield. Defend me from the pestilence that walketh in darkness : deliver me from destruction that wasteth at noon-day. Give Thy Angels charge over me, to protect and guide me in all my ways. Prepare me, O Lord, against the hour of death, and strengthen my soul in the assurance of Thy mercy. Humble my heart with the true sense of my transgres-

sions, and work in my soul an unfeigned repentance. Enlarge mine eyes that I may weep day and night, for grieving and offending so gracious a Father. Wean me from the trust of all transitory things, and let the world's vanity daily die in me. Take from me the immoderate fear of death ; and train me, O God, for the day of my dissolution. Instruct and rectify my vain desires, that all my wishes may stand with Thy will. In life, be Thou my Governour ; in death, be Thou my comfort ; that living or dying I may be Thine. Teach me by Thy judgments to hate sin, and let Thy mercies breed in me a filial love. Be gracious to those whom Thou hast marked for death, and seal in their hearts the assurance of Thy favour ; that being Members of one body, we may rejoice in one head ; that having numbered our days in wisdom, we may be numbered with Thy Saints in glory everlasting.

I. CORINTHIANS, XV. 55.

O death, where is thy sting ? O grave, where is thy victory ?

S. Aug.

That must not be thought an evil death which follows a holy life. For nothing makes an evil death, but that which comes after death.



The Persecuted Man's Misery.

MIT these the gains of Godliness ? Are these the wages of a holy life ? Hath the ungrateful world no other thanks for him that honours his Creator, but scorn, contempt, and persecution ? Whilst I prized the world, I wanted nothing that the world calls good : neglected honour followed me ; unsought for pleasure courted me ; unpurchased fortunes fell upon me : I could not wish that happiness I had not ; I could not want the happiness earth had. Nothing was too dear ; nothing was too precious. Thus whilst I prized the world, the world prized me. If I were sad, her mirthful smiles would cheer me ; if sick, her mournful sons would visit me ; if weary, her wanton lap would dandle me ; where rocked into a slumber, I dreamed all this was but a dream, and waking, found it so. Not willing to be fed with shadows, I changed my thoughts, and my affections altered ; and finding earth too strait for my desires, I cast mine eye to heaven, and after many conflicts betwixt my members and my mind, even there I fixed. The jealous earth grew angry, frowned, and called me fool, withdrew her honours, withheld her pleasures, recalled her favours ; and now I live despised, contemned and poor. O sad condition of mankind ! How plausible are his ways to death ! and how unpleasant are his paths to

life ! No sooner had I made a covenant with God, but the world made a covenant against me, scandalled my name, slandered my actions, derided my simplicity, despised my integrity. For my professions sake I have been reproached, and the reproaches of the world have fallen upon me. If I chastened my soul with fasting, it stiled me with the name of hypocrite ; if I reprove the vanity of the times, it derides me with the style of Puritan. I am become a stranger to my brethren, and an alien to my mother's son. I go mourning all the day long, and my bosom-friends are estranged from me. They afflict my body with open punishment, and make a pastime of my affliction. They that sit in the gate speak evil of me, and drunkards make their songs against me.

This Reward.

But, be thou not dismayed, my soul, nor let the arm of flesh discourage thee. Thy persecutions here are nothing but the prophecies of a paradise hereafter. He that is born of the flesh, inherits the pleasures of the world ; but thou that art born of the Spirit, hear what the Spirit saith,

MATTHEW V. 10.

Blessed are they that are persecuted for Righteousness' sake : for their's is the Kingdom of Heaven.

His Proofs.

LUKE VI. 22.

BLESSED are ye, when men shall hate you, and seperate themselves from you, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake.

I. PETER, III. 14.

If ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye : and be not afraid of their terror, neither be ye troubled.

MATTHEW X. 22.

Ye shall be hated of all men for My name's sake : but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.

MATTHEW XIX. 29.

Every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive an hundred-fold, and shall inherit everlasting life.

Chrysost.

We are afflicted by God, that our reward and crown may hereby be increased ; and as much as He addeth to our tribulation, so much and more will be added to our retribution.

Greg. Nyss. de Prov.

Our life is a warfare, and this world a place of masteries, wherein the greatest garlands are allotted to them who sustain the greatest labors : for by the smart of our stripes is augmented the glory of our reward.

This Soliloquie.

HE that shall weigh the gain of Godliness by the scales of the world, or the pleasures of the earth by the balances of the Sanctuary, shall upon a review find a bad market. Thinkest thou, my soul, to be made happy by the smiles of earth, or unhappy by her frowns ? When she fawns upon thee, she deludes thee ; when she kisses thee, she betrays thee. She brings thee butter in a lordly dish, and bears a hammer in her deadly hand. Trust not her flattery, O my soul ; nor let her malice move thee. Her music is thy magic ; her sweetness is thy snare ; she is the high-way to eternal death. If thou love her, thou hast begun thy journey ; if thou honour her, thou mendest thy pace ; if thou obey her, thou art at thy journey's end. When she distastes thee, Christ relishes in thee ; when she afflicts thee, God instructs thee ; when she locks her gates against thee, heaven opens for thee ; when she despairs thee, God honours thee ; when she forsakes thee, He owns thee ; when she persecutes thee, He crowns thee. Why art thou then disquieted, my soul, and why is thy spirit troubled within thee ? Trust thou in Him by faith : if thou want comfort, fly to Him by prayer.

This Prayer.

THOU therefore, O most blessed and glorious Spirit, in whose eyes the Saints are precious, who puttest all their tears into Thy bottle, and in the midst of all their sorrows sendest comfort to Thy elect, behold my sufferings, and regard my sorrows. Let not thine enemies triumph and make a scorn of him that fears Thee. Strengthen me, O God, to maintain Thy cause, lest they that persecute me think there is no God. Thou knowest my reproach and shame, and how they buffet me all the day long. Arise, O God, and plead Thy cause, and let them know that Thou art God. Make me to hear the voice of joy and gladness, that the bones which they have broken may rejoice. Let not the wicked have power over me, but graciously deliver me for the glory of Thy name. Remove this bitter cup of affliction from me: but not my will, but Thine be done. Give me patience to endure till Thou art pleased to release me, and courage to bear what Thy wisdom shall permit. Let not the vanities of the world deceive me, nor the corruptions of my flesh disturb me: let not the suggestions of Satan deter me, nor the threatenings of man divert me. Preserve my footsteps in the ways of Thy truth, and keep me truly constant to the end. In all my afflictions keep me from murmuring, and let Thy grace be sufficient for me. Season my heart with the sense of Thy love;

and strengthen my faith in all my trials. Give me an inward thankfulness, O God, that Thou hast made me worthy to suffer for Thy name. Convert my enemies, if they belong to Thee. Be merciful to them that hate me, and do good to those that persecute me: Open their eyes, that they may see Thy truth; and turn their hearts, that they may fear Thy name. In all my tribulations be not Thou far from me, and sanctify my great afflictions to me. Lord, in the multitude of Thy mercies hear me, and in the truth of Thy salvation help me; that I confessing Thee here before the children of men with an undaunted resolution, may be enrolled in the Kingdom of Grace by Thy goodness, and hereafter reign in the Kingdom of Glory in Thy Eternity.

PSALM CXIX. 71.

It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn Thy Statutes.

S. Chrysost.

To suffer patiently, is a greater gift than to raise the dead.

Cassian.

They make free-will-offerings to God, that in the midst of their sufferings give thanks.



The Sinner's Accomp^t.

LIII I can flatter my own destruction, and with the common stream of frail mortality run into the dead sea of everlasting death ! How soundly I can sleep in the wanton lap of treacherous security, until I wake disarmed of all my strength, and turn a prey to that false Philistine that seeks my soul ! When I call to mind the course that I have run, and set to view the steps that I have trod, how easily can I excuse my failings, and set them on the score of miserable Adam ! But when I seriously consider whose law I have offended, and strictly examine my actions by that law, and justly proportion my punishment to those actions, O then I stand and tremble, and am swallowed up with despair. O then my sins appear too great for pardon, and my punishment too great for patience. Which way soever I turn, I turn to my disquiet : look where I will, I view my own discomfort. Look up, I see a dreadful God ; look down, I see a direful devil ; look forward, I see a roll of sins ; look backward, I see a roaring conscience ; look on my right hand, I see my bold presumption ; look on my left hand, I see my base despair : look within me, I see my own corruption ; look about me, I see nothing but confusion. I have sinned upon ignorance, ignorance will not excuse me : I have sinned upon weakness, weakness will not plead for me : I have

sinned against my conscience, my conscience will accuse me : I have sinned against the law, the law condemns me. What canst thou say, my soul, that sentence of death should not be given against thee ? Can the voice of thy sorrow outcry the language of thy sin ? Can the tears of thine eye scour the stains of thy soul ? Can the sighs of a finite creature satisfy for the offences against an infinite Creator ? Or art thou able to endure the punishments of Eternity ? He that made thee without thee will not save thee without thee ; and what canst thou do towards thy own Salvation ?

Hic quietus est.

Prostrate thyself, my soul : behold thy misery, and bewail thyself; renounce thyself, abhor thyself, fly to the horns of the altar, and call for the promise of mercy, in which thou mayest find comfort.

EZEKIEL XVIII. 21.

If the wicked shall turn from all his sins that he hath committed and keep all My Statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die.

His Proofs.

ACTS III. 19.

REPENT ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord. 2 PETER, III. 9.

The Lord is long-suffering towards us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

EZEKIEL XXXIII, 11.

As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way, and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways: for why will ye die, O house of Israel.

S. Aug.

Lord, though I have done that for which thou mightest justly damn me, yet thou canst not lose that whereby thou mayest save me. Thou wilt not, sweet Jesus, so much remember Thy justice against the sinner, as Thy benignity towards Thy creature. Thou canst forget the insolence of the provoker, and wilt in mercy behold the misery of the invoker; for what is Jesus but a Saviour?

Anselm.

My sins plead against me, but my Saviour is my Advocate. It is much that my rebellions have deserved, but it is more that my Redeemer hath merited: so that though my flesh hath provoked Thee to vengeance, yet the flesh of Christ can move Thee to mercy.

This Soliloquie.

AN humble confidence is the mean betwixt the two extremes, presumption and despair: that usurps God's mercy upon false grounds; this excludes it, and all means to it: the first takes away the sense of sin, the last blocks up the way to pardon. Take heed, O my dejected soul; plunge not thyself in that sad gulf, lest, (wanting bottom) thou sink for ever; swim not with bladders, lest thou tire. Having fastened one eye upon the ugliness of thy sin, fix the other upon the merits of a Saviour: so when thou discoverest the disease, thy disease will discover a remedy. When the fiery Serpent hath stung thee, the brazen Serpent must heal thee. Nothing, O my soul, makes thy sin too great for mercy, but despair: this only excludes repentance, and impenitence alone makes thee incapable of pardon. He that hath promised forgiveness at thy repentance, hath not promised repentance at thy pleasure. Haste therefore, O my soul, and reconcile thee to thy God to day, lest it should prove too late tomorrow. Turn thy hand from thy present sin, and God will turn His eyes from thy past sin. Cry aloud and spare not, lest thy sin cry aloud, and He spare not. Let thy confession find a tongue, and His compassion will find an ear.

This Prayer.

O GOD, that art in Thyself most glorious, but in Thy Son most gracious ; to the rebellious terrible, but to the penitent merciful ; I, the work of Thine own hands, but wholly disfamed by mine own corruptions, humbly prostrate my sinful self before the foot-stool of Thy mercy-seat, totally miserable through my sins, but truly penitent for my offences. Lord, if Thou shouldest proceed against me in Thy justice, my portion would be no less than eternal death. But Thy delight is rather to extend Thy mercy in the conversion of a soul, than exercise Thy justice in the confusion of a sinner. Bow down therefore Thy gracious ear to a poor wretch that stands trembling before the bar of Thy justice, and from thence presumes to appeal to the seat of Thy mercy. I know, O God, mine iniquities are greater than my knowledge, but yet Thy mercy is greater than mine iniquities : I know moreover that Thou art more just, but in showing Thy mercy, Thy justice will be no loser. Lord, I am miserable, therefore a fit object for Thy mercy ; Lord, I am penitent, and therefore a proper subject for Thy pity : for I know Thou art a gracious God, of long sufferance, and slow to anger, else had I now been roaring under Thy justice, that am here sueing for Thy mercy. Lord, I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me ; the number of them is

innumerable, and the burthen of them is intolerable. I have sinned against a just God, I have sinned against a gracious Father; I there fly from Thee as a sharp revenger, and to Thee as a sweet Redeemer. Remember not Thy justice towards a sinner, but think upon Thy benignity towards Thy creature. Have respect to what Thy Son hath done for me, and forget what my sins have done against me. Wash my guiltiness in His blood, and in the multitude of Thy compassions, behold the multitude of my transgressions. Pardon what is past, and arm me for the time to come; that being purged from my sins, and cleansed from my offences, I may be clothed here with the robes of grace, and crowned hereafter with a crown of glory.

Incert.

He that hath good thoughts, from him will flow good words and good actions.

Ambros.

Thinkest thou that God, who gave thee grace to repent thee of thy sin, will not pardon them after thy repentance?



The Sinner's Thirst.

LIL, I, that like the Prodigal had once the freedom of my Father's table, could now be satisfied with the crumbs beneath it ; I, that could clothe me with change of garments from my Father's wardrobe, could now be thankful but for rags to hide my nakedness : I, that forsook him like a disobedient son, would hold it now a happiness to be his meanest servant. What shall I do ? or whither shall I go ? By whose charity shall I subsist ? My weakness will not give me leave to work ; my unworthiness will not suffer me to appear ; nor have I a friend to help me. I, that have renounced my Father, have made myself no son ; and being no son, how dare my boldness call Him Father ? I have offended Him, and who shall reconcile us ? I have grieved Him, and who shall make my peace ? I have forsaken Him, and who shall restore me to Him ? Can I expect a blessing from Him I have offended ? Can I presume of favour from Him I have so grieved ? Can I deserve a birth-right from Him I have forsaken ? O my soul, how, how hast thou beslaved thyself, and lost that freedom, without the enjoyment whereof thou art utterly lost ? Thou hast lost that Father that was wont to bless thee : thou hast lost that Lord that was pleased to govern thee : thou hast renounced that Saviour that redeemed thee ; and only hast reserved a God to punish thee, a Judge

to sentence thee : thou hast lost those blessings by thy contempt which thou canst not regain with the price of thy tears : thou hast quenched that Spirit whereby thou hadst the power to quench the fiery darts of Satan : thou hast diverted the current of that Fountain whose water satisfied thy dull desires. O my sad soul, how ! how wert thou distempered, that couldst not relish that which nourished Angels into immortality ! Why didst thou not inebriate thyself with that delicious sweetness, and ark it up like Israel's manna, to remain with thee and the succeeding generations ? O that mine eyes could teach those blessed streams to run, which my ungratefulness hath stopt ! Or that my prayers could, like Elijah's, unlock the gates of Heaven, and bring down those celestial showers to slake my thirst, that I may drink my fill of that immortal water !

This Satisfying.

Take comfort, O my soul ; thy God hath heard thy prayers, and crowned them with this promise,

REVELATIONS XXI. 6.

I will give to him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life to drink freely.

His Proofs.

MATTHEW V. 6.

BLESSED are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness : for they shall be filled.

JOHN IV. 14.

But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst : but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

JOHN VII. 37, 38.

If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink. He that believeth on me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

REVELATIONS XXII. 17.

Let him that is athirst, come : and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

August. Soliloq. 35.*O fountain of life, and vein of living waters, when shall I leave this forsaken, impassable, and dry earth, and taste the waters of thy sweetness, that I may behold thy virtue and thy glory, and slake my thirst with the streams of thy mercy ? Lord, I thirst ; Thou art the spring of life, satisfy me : I thirst, Lord, I thirst after Thee the living God.*

Cyril. in Joh. cap. 10.

O precious water, which quenches the noisome thirst of this world, that scoureth all the stains of sinners, that watereth the earth of our souls with Heavenly showers, and bringeth back the thirsty heart of man to his only God !

This Epiphany.

IT is less danger to want than to be insensible of thy wants. Dost thou want, my soul ? desire : dost thou desire ? ask : dost thou ask ? thou shalt receive ; and what thou shalt receive shall satisfy thee. Be not troubled : if thy wants cast thee down, let thy desires raise thee up. Shall thy natural wants be confident of supply from thy natural father, and shall thy spiritual defects despair to be repaired by thy spiritual Father ? How dost thou injure Providence, O my distrustful soul ! How dost thou wrong the God of mercy ! how slight the God of truth ! He that hears the cry of ravens, and feeds them with a gracious hand, will He be deaf to thee ? He that robes the lilies of the field, that neither sue nor care to be apparelled, will He deny thee those graces He hath commanded thee to ask ? Art thou hungry ? He is the bread of life : art thou thirsty ? He is the water of life : art thou naked ? fly to Him, and He will give thee the righteousness of His own Son. Build upon His promise, who is truth itself : rely upon His mercy, who is goodness itself. Art thou a prodigal ? yet remember thou art a son : is He offended ? He will not forget He is a Father. Come, therefore, with a filial boldness, and He will grant thy heart's desire.

This Prayer.

O GOD, that art the well-spring of all grace, and the fountain of all goodness, whose promises are faithful, and whose word is truth, who hearest the sighing of a contrite heart, and healest the ruptures of an humble spirit; I, here invited by Thy mercies and Thy gracious commands, prostrate myself before Thee, and present unto Thee the sad petition of a pensive breast. I have sinned, O Lord, I have sinned against Heaven and against Thee, and am no longer worthy to be called Thy son. I have cast off the yoke of my obedience; I have broken the bands of Thy covenant, and cast them far from me. I have sinned against Thy mercies, and spurned against Thy judgments: Thy judgments have neither terrified, nor Thy mercies mollified me. But I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sins are ever before me. Remember not the frailties of my youth, O God, nor the follies of my elder days. Remember not how I have forgotten Thee; remember not how I have forsaken Thee. Close Thou Thine eyes at my rebellion, and open Thine ears at my repentance. Be merciful, O God, at my contrition: a broken heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise. Renew me according to the abundance of Thy mercies, and restore me to the joy of Thy salvation. Establish my heart in the love of Thy truth, and increase in me a Spiritual thirst. Make me to understand the way

of Thy precepts, and let Thy testimonies be my whole delight. As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so my soul longeth for the well-springs of life. Lord, Thou hast promised to answer those that call unto Thee, to be found by those that seek unto Thee, and satisfy those that thirst after Thee : make good Thy word, O God, and hear my prayer ; make good Thy promise, Lord, and be not far from me. I have sought Thee in Thy promise, let me find Thee in Thy performance : I have thirsted for Thy grace, O fill me with Thy goodness. Open Thy well-springs, that I may drink freely of the waters of life ; that my soul being satisfied in the fulness of Thy pleasures, my mouth may be filled with the sound of Thy praises ; that here magnifying Thy name in the Kingdom of grace, I may reign with Thee hereafter in the Kingdom of glory.

ISAIAH LV. 1.

Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money ; come ye, buy, and eat ; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

S. Ambros.

None can take Christ from thee, unless thou take Him from thyself.



The Good Man's Distrust.

WHIL I consider the all-sufficiency of my God, I dare not question the performance of His promises ; but when I behold the insufficiency of myself, I cannot but fear the promises of His performance. When I behold in Him the goodness of a Father, my heart grows confident, and I cannot fear ; but when I find in me the disobedience of a Son, my soul grows conscious, and I dare not hope. When I dive into the depth of my own misery, I search further, and find a greater depth of His mercy, and am secure ; but when I find the freeness of His mercy requited with the wilfulness of my rebellion, O then my soul despairs, and thus destroys the grounds of all my comfort. He invites my laden soul to come, and offers rest : alas ! I come, and yet my laden soul can find no ease. He promises eternal life to my belief ; but yet He gives me not the power to believe. He bids me in His name propound my wants, with promise of supply ; and yet I sue, and sue, and still I sue in vain. He promises a Comforter to strengthen my remembrance ; yet still my treacherous memory fails me. He promises to be a Father to the fatherless ; yet still my wants persuade me that I want a Father. He promises audience in my time of trouble ; and yet I call unheard, and mourn without redress. He promises forgiveness to the truly repentant ; but

who shall give me power to repent ? He promises to gather me in mercy, though a while forsaken ; yet I have long expected, with a frustrate expectation. He promises an exaltation to him that is humbled ; yet my dejected heart is still suppressed. He promised freedom from the second death to him that conquers ; I strive to overcome, yet feel a hell. His promise was to guard His vineyard, and to dress it ; yet foxes destroy it, and the wild boar supplants it. He promised comfort to all those that mourn ; and yet I mourn without a Comforter. He promised that the woman's seed should break the serpent's head ; and yet the serpent never was more strong. He bid me seek, and I should find ; and yet alas ! I seek, but can find nothing but my wants. He calls them blessed that suffer for His name ; yet who more miserable ? He promises the springs of life to him that thirsts ; and yet I thirst to death. My soul, what are His promises to thee, that art not able to perform those hard conditions that gave thee interest in those promises ?

His Satisfaction.

Cheer up, my soul, and what thou canst not do, endeavour. He that accepts the will for the deed, is in His promise yea and amen.

MARK XIII. 31.

Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away.

His Proofs.

1. KINGS, VIII. 56.

BLESSED be the Lord that hath given rest unto His people, according unto all that He hath promised. There hath not failed one word of all His good promises which He hath promised.

2. CORINTHIANS, I. 20.

For all the promises of God in Him are Yea, and in Him Amen.

2. KINGS, X. 10.

Know then, that there shall fall to the ground nothing of the word of the Lord.

PSALM CXIX. 89.

For ever, O Lord, Thy word is settled in Heaven.

Author Scalæ Parad. tom. 9. Aug. c. 8.

Fear not, O Bride, nor despair: think not thyself contemned if thy bridegroom withdraw his face a-while. All things co-operate for the best: both from His absence and His presence thou gainest light. He cometh to thee, and goeth from thee: he cometh to make thee console; he goeth to make thee cautious, lest thy abundant consolation puff thee up: he cometh, that thy languishing soul may be comforted; he goeth, lest his familiarity should be contemned, and being absent to be more desired, and being desired to be more earnestly sought, and being long sought to be more acceptably found.

This Soliloquy.

WILT thou never, O my distrustful soul, submit thy will unto His will that made thee? Must His goodness be always the circumference of thy desires, and thy pleasure still the centre? Is it not enough that Yea and Amen hath promised the substance of thy happiness, but must thou bind Him to thy circumstances? Shall the power of an infinite Creator be confined to the pleasure of a finite creature? Stand not in thine own light, my soul; the independence of thy exorbitant desires shuts the door upon that happiness thou desirest. Art thou covetous of a blessing before thou art qualified to receive it? He that intends thee a kingdom, will first make thee capable of a kingdom. Thou that shalt be a gainer by His favour, shalt be no loser by His delay. Canst thou hope to be filled with the water of life, not first purged with the fire of affliction? How often hast thou murmured for that, which if enjoyed had been thy ruin? God hath promised, but hath delayed performance, to exercise thy patience. He hath decreed, but yet forbears, to rectify thy faith. If faith be able to remove mountains, endeavour to remove thy infidelity. Endure, hope, believe; and He that comes will come, and will not tarry. O my soul, as nothing hinders the performance of His promise, but distrust, so nothing hastens the promise of His performance but thy prayer.

This Prayer.

O GOD, that art all-sufficient in Thyself, all-gracious in Thy Son, most absolute in Thy purposes, and most faithful in Thy promises ; I, the miserable object of Thy mercy, here humbly present myself before Thee, the merciful beholder of my misery. Lord, wherein have I to trust, but in Thy mercies ? and whereupon have I to build, but on Thy promises ? Every sin is full of death, and every action is full of sin ; insomuch that my whole life is nothing but a continued rebellion against Thee : but, O my God, Thy goodness is like Thyself, infinite ; and Thy mercy is past my comprehending. Thou knowest that I am evil, and wholly evil, and that continually. Thou knowest I am but dust and ashes, and the very off-spring of corruption, and Thy glory is no less magnified in my confusion than in my salvation. But, Lord, Thou art a gracious God, and takest no pleasure in the death of a distressed sinner. Thy mercy is over all Thy works, and Thy goodness is from generation to generation. When I was in open rebellion against Thee, Thou reconciledst Thyself to me ; when I was utterly lost, Thou redeemedst me with the innocent blood of Thy dear Son ; and being redeemed, Thou hast sanctified me with the freeness of Thy Spirit. Thou hast raised me by Thy power and strengthened me by Thy promises. What shall

I return Thee, O my God, for what kind of recompence can dust and ashes make Thee ? My tongue shall sing the wonders of Thy goodness, and praise Thy name for ever and ever. Continue, O Lord, Thy mercies to me, and visit me according to Thy wonted kindness. Give me a wise heart, that I may give respect unto all Thy commandments, and a full confidence in all Thy promises. Quicken my hope in the expectation of Thy performance, and give me patience till then to attend Thy leisure. Lord, where I cannot understand, O teach me to wonder : and what I cannot do, give me power to believe. Let not the apparition of mine own corruptions plunge me in despair, nor yet the sense of Thy indulgent love give me occasion to presume : that living here in the expectation of Thy truth, my hopes may be perfected into the glory of Thy name.

PHILIP II. 12.

Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

MATTHEW XXIV. 46.

Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord when He cometh shall find so doing.







